

BRANCH ORGANIZATION January 2015

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PROLOGUE

Dear Committee Member:

This publication is designed to provide unified theocratic direction to Branch and Country committee members worldwide. This manual also serves as a helpful reference for Governing Body members, helpers to Governing Body committees, and headquarters representatives. Each brother who is provided with a copy of this manual should read it thoroughly from time to time so as to stay up-to-date with theocratic policies and procedures. Elders at Bethel should be foremost in recognizing theocratic instructions, studying them, and applying them diligently.—Gen. 6:22; Ex. 7:6; 39:32; Josh. 1:8; 14:5; Prov. 1:5; John 14:31; 1 Cor. 4:17; Jas. 1:22.

Branch and Country committee members should especially be well acquainted with organizational instructions so that they can help others at Bethel and in the field to accomplish their ministry fully. (2 Tim. 4:5) If because of legal restrictions or some other exceptional circumstance it appears to the committee that a particular organizational policy or procedure cannot be implemented locally, the committee should explain matters clearly in writing to the Governing Body or to the appropriate Governing Body committee and await further direction.

Each Branch and Country committee member is to be provided with a printed personal copy of this manual. If it will be helpful to him, a committee member may also obtain a personal copy of *Branch Organization* in another language if available. If a brother who serves as a secretary to your committee or to a committee member needs the manual for his work, he too may receive it. This approval applies to printed or electronic versions of *Branch Organization* in any language, including access in the Bethel edition of *Watchtower Library*. Care should be taken to ensure that the material is made available only to these authorized brothers, since the content of

this manual is confidential and is not to be shared with those outside of Bethel.

The portions of this manual that apply to a Bethel department should be made available to the department overseer. In turn, any *Branch Organization* instructions that apply to those working in the department should be made available to the members of the department.

When revisions to this manual are received, the updated pages should be placed in the manual and the old pages promptly destroyed. At times, a letter from the Governing Body or one of its committees will set forth updated direction that will supersede the direction herein until revised *Branch Organization* pages are made available. All should be alert to follow the latest instructions.

In addition to being acquainted with this manual, committee members should keep up-to-date with the Scriptural principles and theocratic direction provided in *Dwelling Together in Unity*, the *Watchtower* and *Awake!* magazines, *Our Kingdom Ministry*, *Organized to Do Jehovah's Will*, "Shepherd the Flock of God"—1 Peter 5:2, *Circuit Overseer Guidelines*, *Correspondence Guidelines*, and other policy materials. This includes letters that are sent to all branch offices and letters sent to individual branch offices in response to local needs.

Please be assured that we appreciate your hard work in looking after Kingdom interests in your part of the world field. (1 Pet. 5:2, 3) It is our prayer that Jehovah will grant you "the wisdom from above" to care properly for your many responsibilities, all to the praise of our Great Shepherd.—Jas. 3:17, 18; Ps. 23:1.

Your brothers,
Governing Body
of Jehovah's Witnesses

CHAPTER 1

GOVERNING BODY AND GOVERNING BODY COMMITTEES

1. Governing Body: The Governing Body of Jehovah's Witnesses is made up of brothers who are anointed servants of Jehovah God. They have the responsibility for giving direction and impetus to the Kingdom work. (Matt. 24:14, 45-47; Rev. 12:17) Like its first-century counterpart, the Governing Body today looks to Jehovah, the Universal Sovereign, and to Jesus Christ, the Head of the congregation, for direction in all matters. (1 Cor. 11:3; Eph. 5:23) The Governing Body is organized to take the lead as Jehovah directs it by holy spirit. The members of the Governing Body do not regard themselves as the leaders of Jehovah's people. Rather, like all anointed Christians on earth, they "keep following the Lamb [Jesus Christ] no matter where he goes." —Rev. 14:4.

2. The Bible says: "Let all things take place decently and by arrangement." (1 Cor. 14:40) The Governing Body obeys this direction by putting in place various helpful procedures and guidelines that ensure the smooth and orderly operation of the branch offices and the congregations. Responsible Christian men do their part by setting an example of obedience as they put such arrangements into effect. All Christians, especially overseers, should look to Jehovah for guidance and should pray regularly for his direction and blessing. All should show themselves "reasonable, ready to obey" those placed in oversight. (Jas. 3:17) Thus, each group, congregation, circuit, and branch is blessed with a united, orderly body of believers who reflect well on the happy God.—1 Cor. 14:33; 1 Tim. 1:11.

3. While the Governing Body delegates certain details or responsibilities to committees made up of its own members, to committees made up of other dedicated servants of God, or to instruments such as corporations and legal agencies, the Governing Body always takes the lead in promoting the smooth functioning of the organization and the unity of all of God's people.—Acts 6:1-6; 1 Tim. 1:3; Titus 1:5; Heb. 13:17; *w01* 1/15 pp. 28-31.

4. The Governing Body gives final approval for new publications as well as new audio and video programs.

5. The Governing Body cares for the appointment and deletion of Branch and Country committee members and designates the brother who will serve as the coordinator of the committee. It also appoints circuit overseers and country representatives. In most cases, such appointments are made based on recommendations received from the Branch Committee. The Governing Body also appoints helpers to Governing Body committees as well as headquarters representatives qualified to make branch visits.

6. The Governing Body may arrange for qualified men to care for theocratic assignments in any locality at any time. It is not bound by recommendations received from other elders. Such recommendations serve merely as a guide and may even be rejected for reasons known to the Governing Body. The Governing Body has the prerogative to use its discretion and look into any matters it deems necessary to examine with regard to the Kingdom work.

7. To oversee various aspects of the Kingdom work, six administrative Governing Body committees have been established. [See Chart 1.1.] Their responsibilities are as follows.

8. Coordinators' Committee: This committee oversees legal matters and the use of the media when necessary to convey an accurate picture of our beliefs. It responds to disasters, outbreaks of persecution, and other emergencies affecting Jehovah's Witnesses anywhere in the world. In general, all computer-related issues are also cared for by this committee. However, the Writing Committee oversees matters having to do with the development and maintenance of computer programs and tools used to process and translate publications and to publish them in electronic format, including MEPS, the Watchtower Translation System (WTS), *Watchtower Library*, and *jw.org*.

9. Personnel Committee: This committee oversees the arrangements for the physical and spiritual welfare and assistance of Bethel family members earth wide. (Eph. 4:3; Phil. 2:1-5; Jas. 5:14-16) It oversees the selecting and inviting of new members of Bethel families, Bethelites in foreign service, construction servants and volunteers, Assembly Hall servants, part-time and full-time commuters, and temporary volunteers and handles questions regarding their service. Those in the aforementioned groups who become members of the Worldwide Order of Special Full-Time Servants and are under the vow of poverty are appointed by the Personnel Committee.

10. Publishing Committee: This committee supervises the printing and shipping of Bible literature worldwide. It has oversight of printeries and properties owned and operated by the various corporations used by Jehovah's Witnesses. Funding for branches is approved and arranged for under the direction of the Publishing Committee. It has over-

sight of issues involving accounting, auditing, allowances, insurance, taxes, and other financial matters for branch facilities throughout the world, such as the purchase or sale of real estate, equipment, and vehicles. All *Branch Requests*, *Nonliterature Branch Requests*, and other budget approvals are processed and approved under the direction of this committee. It oversees arrangements for the construction, renovation, and maintenance of all the organization's facilities, including branches, remote translation offices, missionary homes, schools, Kingdom Halls, and Assembly Halls.

11. Expenditures of up to USD 2,000,000 will be approved by the Publishing Committee. The Governing Body, however, is responsible for approving major real estate transactions and significant construction projects involving the expenditure of more than USD 2,000,000. In most cases, Branch Committees will present the details of such projects to the Publishing Committee, and thereafter, the matter will be presented to the Governing Body.

12. Service Committee: This committee supervises all areas of the evangelizing work comprising the activity of publishers, pioneers, and missionaries, as well as congregation organization and the shepherding activities of elders and circuit overseers. It appoints field missionaries and assigns them to areas of need. The Service Committee also provides guidance to branch offices as to the responsibilities of the Service Department and supervises the preparation of *Our Kingdom Ministry*. Hospital Information Services at world headquarters as well as the activity of Hospital Information Desks, Hospital Liaison Committees, and Patient Visitation Groups is supervised by the Service Committee. Instructions on field service reporting are given by the Service Committee. It also assigns geographic locations to a particular branch office and outlines the program for periodic branch visits by headquarters representatives

and branch shepherding visits by Governing Body members.

13. Difficult service-related questions having to do with the formation of judicial, appeal, and special committees as well as problems involving congregation members, elders, and circuit overseers that cannot be handled by a Branch Committee are referred to the Service Committee. Specific cases in which the standing of those in the congregations might be affected are to be referred to this committee.

14. While the Teaching Committee oversees the preparation of the *curriculum* for theocratic schools, the Service Committee provides direction to the branches on the *operation and scheduling* of the schools that are conducted within their branch territories. The Service Committee determines who may be invited to attend the Watchtower Bible School of Gilead and the School for Branch Committee Members and Their Wives.

15. Teaching Committee: This committee supervises the production of spiritual food that is delivered orally for the benefit of the worldwide brotherhood and supervises the format that is to be followed at congregation meetings. For example, it is directly involved in preparing talk outlines, convention costume dramas and sound-only drama scripts and recordings, convention chairman's introductions, as well as audio and video publications that are distributed on DVD, posted on jw.org, or broadcast through other means. These materials are used for dispensing instruction at Bethel spiritual programs, Public Meetings, circuit assemblies, and regional conventions. The Teaching Committee also oversees the organization of international, special, national, and regional conventions around the world as directed by the Governing Body. In addition, this committee supervises the Scriptural curriculum for nine theocratic schools, namely:

Watchtower Bible School of Gilead
School for Branch Committee
Members and Their Wives
School for Circuit Overseers and
Their Wives
School for Kingdom Evangelizers
School for Congregation Elders
Kingdom Ministry School
Bethel Entrants' School
Pioneer Service School
Theocratic Ministry School

16. The Theocratic Schools Department works under the supervision of the Teaching Committee and assists in instructing students of the Watchtower Bible School of Gilead and the School for Branch Committee Members and Their Wives.

17. Besides reviewing and approving all new recommendations of Morning Worship chairmen and instructors of the School for Kingdom Evangelizers, the Teaching Committee also handles inquiries from branches regarding the above matters, including queries about alternate source material for the Congregation Bible Study in languages into which the main study publication has not yet been translated. The Teaching Committee reviews and approves programs for the dedication of new Assembly Halls and branch facilities, providing helpful guidelines for these events. Guiding principles are also given to the branches on how to conduct morning worship and the Bethel family *Watchtower* Study. In addition, outlines for Monday night lectures presented to the worldwide Bethel family each service year are reviewed and approved by this committee.

18. Assisted by Audio/Video Services, the Teaching Committee looks after the audio/video needs of all branches grouped under various Regional Audio/Video Centers. The Teaching Committee also oversees the Theocratic Schools Department, the WHQ Travel Department, and the Broadcasting Department. More

specific information about each department is located in Chapter 7.

19. Writing Committee: This committee supervises the production of spiritual food in written and electronic form for our brothers and for the public in general. It also develops and maintains the organization's Web sites and oversees the translation work done throughout the earth. This includes giving approval for the translation of audio and video programs from English into additional languages.

20. The publications that the Writing Committee supervises include Bibles, the *Watchtower* and *Awake!* magazines,

all bound books, booklets, brochures, tracts, invitations, final copy for *Our Kingdom Ministry*, and any revisions of these. It also supervises the production of public witnessing posters and unique branch materials, such as dedication and tour brochures and public relations materials. This committee also approves scripts for dramas, talk outlines, and manuscripts. Additionally, the Writing Committee responds to questions about the meaning of certain scriptures and points presented in the publications, including general questions about doctrines or morals that do not deal with specific cases in which the standing of those in the congregations might be affected.

CONFIDENTIAL

CHART 1.1



CONFIDENTIAL

CHAPTER 2

RESPONSIBILITY OF BRANCH COMMITTEE MEMBERS

1. The Governing Body appoints well-qualified elders to serve as members of a Branch Committee. Each Branch Committee oversees the preaching work in the field and the work in the branch office within its assigned territory. As the representatives of the Governing Body in their assigned territory, Branch Committee members must faithfully implement and follow the direction coming from God's Word and "the faithful and discreet slave."—Matt. 24:45-47.

2. Each Branch Committee member must feel a deep sense of responsibility to Jehovah. Thus, he must work diligently to fortify and maintain his good relationship with God. He must be a diligent student of the Bible and be governed by its laws and principles in his personal and public life. (Josh. 1:8; Ps. 1:2) He must be zealous for the ministry. (2 Tim. 4:2) He must be a fine example in following Bethel rules, never feeling that he is above them. (Heb. 13:17) His deep love and respect for Jehovah fuels his desire to be faithful in little and in much. (Luke 16:10; 1 John 5:3) He recognizes that his appointment by holy spirit is a privilege and that it will be taken away if he neglects his spirituality. (1 Tim. 4:14-16) His humble mental attitude moves him to seek out and listen to the opinions of others, to take the lead in showing honor, and to be a peacemaker. (1 Ki. 22:19-23; Matt. 5:9; Rom. 12:10; Phil. 2:5-8; Jas. 3:17, 18) Like Christ Jesus, he finds joy in unselfishly serving the interests of his brothers. (Mark 6:31-34; John 13:14, 15; Phil. 2:4) Such dedicated spiritual men are truly gifts from Jehovah to shepherd his precious sheep.—Eph. 4:8, 11, 12; 1 Pet. 5:2, 3.

3. Each Branch Committee member should be able to give as well as to follow direction. He must keep up-to-date with the policies and direction from the Governing Body and help others in oversight at the branch office to do likewise. While he will set a fine example in being willing to work along with his brothers at any task, he will not try to do all the work himself. He will delegate work in a responsible way, helping other spiritual men to be trained and to gain experience so that they too can shoulder weighty responsibilities.

4. Branch Committees also have the responsibility to keep the organization clean. (1 Cor. 5:11-13) They must be courageous in seeing to it that all unrepentant ones are removed from the congregation. Such courageous action builds up respect for the branch office and the Branch Committee. Our brothers should always feel welcome to come to the branch office with any concerns or problems that they may have and be confident that they will receive a hearing ear.—Prov. 21:13.

5. **Dealing With People:** Each member of the Branch Committee should always treat his fellow servants with love, kindness, respect, and dignity. (Eph. 4:32; 1 Pet. 4:17) He must manifest a warm and friendly disposition, being careful never to be harsh or unkind. (Eph. 4:31; Col. 3:8) If, on account of imperfection, he errs in word or deed, he will be quick to admit his fault and apologize. (Matt. 5:23-25) Following in the steps of Christ Jesus, he provides an example in honoring others and pursuing peace.—Rom. 14:19; 1 Pet. 2:21.

6. Branch Committee members do not view themselves as superior to their brothers and thus do not desire to be served or feel entitled to special treatment. (Matt. 20:25-28; 23:6-12; 2 Cor. 1:24) As they seek to imitate Christ Jesus, their lowliness of mind makes them refreshing and upbuilding to those working under their oversight.—Matt. 11:28-30; Phil. 2:3.

7. Members of the Branch Committee should be willing to handle problems, taking time to hear both sides and being cautious never to leave even the impression of partiality or favoritism. (Deut. 13:14; Jas. 2:9) They must keep confidential those matters told them in confidence and not talk to their wives or others about individuals' problems or confidential matters of the organization.—Prov. 25:9.

8. Counsel should not be given hastily. (Prov. 18:13) If unsure of the counsel of God's Word, it is best to consult with others and do research before answering. (Prov. 15:22, 28) If a Branch Committee member has a tendency to speak hastily and later to change his mind as to the course he first advised, the brothers will soon lose confidence in his soundness of judgment. If we read directly from the Scriptures when offering counsel, we make clear that God's Word is the authority for making decisions and that we are not simply giving a personal viewpoint.—2 Tim. 3:16, 17.

9. If a Branch Committee member is a foreigner in the country where he serves, he should recognize that the local people have a measure of pride in their land, their culture, and their way of doing things. Whether a foreigner in the country or not, a Branch Committee member should never take the position that the people he serves are beneath him, speaking to them as inferiors. Instead, as their humble fellow servant, he must work hard to develop appreciation for the local people and their culture, being willing to adapt himself so as

to win their love and respect.—1 Cor. 9:20-23.

10. Nothing contributes more to the happiness of our brothers than the conviction that they are loved and appreciated. (1 Cor. 8:1; 13:4-8) Continue to reflect Jehovah's great love for his sheep. To that end, **committee members should make regular personal visits to each department, speaking briefly with each worker, sharing words of appreciation and encouragement.**

11. **Makeup of a Branch Committee:** In small branches, it may be sufficient to have three members form the Branch Committee. However, in large branches with printing operations, extensive territories, or a variety of languages, five or more members may be needed. It is desirable that one or more members of the Branch Committee be citizens of the country where the branch is located. Nevertheless, in all cases, spiritual qualifications should be viewed as of greatest importance.

12. The appointment as a member of the Branch Committee or to a position of oversight in the branch organization is not for any specified period of time. Having in mind the advancement of the Kingdom work, the Branch Committee may at any time recommend to the Governing Body a new appointment, a removal, or the reassignment of individuals.

13. **Oversight Responsibilities:** The Branch Committee prayerfully determines the distribution of oversight responsibilities for the individual members of the committee. These assignments should take into consideration each brother's age, strengths, experience, and personal circumstances. (Rom. 12:3-8; Rev. 1:20) A Branch Committee member would usually serve as the day-to-day overseer or assistant overseer of a key department. The members of the committee may also serve as Branch Committee contacts for additional Bethel departments. A committee

member should serve as the overseer of the Service Department. (See 6:35) Usually another Branch Committee member would serve as the Translation Department overseer. A committee member would usually serve as the Bethel overseer in a larger branch office, since his role involves the general oversight of all Bethel Home operations. In printing branches, the printery overseer is usually a member of the Branch Committee. The Branch Committee should consider these matters carefully so that there is a balanced distribution of oversight responsibilities. Adjustments should be made as needed in order to promote good order, the peace of the Bethel family, and the advancement of the Kingdom work.—1 Cor. 14:33, 40.

14. When adjustments in oversight are made, the brothers and sisters working in each Bethel department should be clearly informed as to the brother serving as the department overseer, the assistant overseer(s) and, if applicable, the Branch Committee member designated as the contact for the department. Each Branch Committee member should take an active interest in those working in the departments that he is overseeing. He should endeavor to meet weekly with the department overseers under his oversight.

15. Because of age or infirmity, some members may become unable to accept all assignments in connection with the Branch Committee. If so, the committee may wish to recommend an additional member to help with the workload. Nevertheless, the older and experienced members may be retained on the committee to share their wisdom and insight. (Prov. 16:31) In line with the above, it is not necessary for every member to take the chairmanship in rotation. Brothers 80 years of age or older are not to serve as coordinators of Branch or Country committees or as overseers of departments, nor are they to serve as contacts for departments. However, dignified assignments should be found for these older brothers. (1 Tim. 5:1, 17)

For example, they may serve as assistant overseers if their circumstances permit. Older brothers should be keenly interested in passing on their wisdom and experience to those with whom they work. (2 Tim. 2:2) In larger departments, two brothers could serve as assistant overseers if needed. A department overseer or Branch Committee coordinator who is not yet 80 years of age might modestly decide that it would be best to have a younger brother take on that role. (Mic. 6:8) If so, it would be good for the Branch Committee to take the request into consideration to ensure a smooth transition.—See 6:35.

16. Branch Committee Coordinator:

Each Branch Committee has a coordinator appointed by the Governing Body. He is responsible for coordinating the work of the committee and for any departments that the Branch Committee places under his oversight. He is responsible for sending reports and correspondence to the Governing Body and also for keeping the Branch Committee informed of all communications received from the Governing Body. Branch Committee coordinators and those overseeing various departments will find it helpful to keep a calendar of activities. This will assist them in making sure that important matters will be handled on schedule and not be overlooked. The Branch Committee coordinator is responsible for seeing that the minutes of each Branch Committee meeting are kept, showing the date of the meeting, those present, the points considered, and the decisions reached.

17. Branch Committee Chairman:

There is a chairman at each Branch Committee meeting. The chairmanship rotates annually on January 1. The rotation is usually handled alphabetically. The chairman arranges for the agenda to be prepared and distributed to each member of the Branch Committee. The members should receive the agenda well in advance of the meeting so that they have sufficient time to prepare

thoroughly and to give meaningful input. The chairman should notify all members as to the time of the meeting. He will also indicate on the agenda who is assigned to open and close the meeting with prayer. He ensures that there is good order and, along with the Branch Committee coordinator, sees that committee decisions are carried out in a timely manner.

18. Branch Committee Meetings:

The Branch Committee decides when to hold its regular meetings. The committee should not postpone giving attention to its responsibilities or delay in providing direction needed to expedite the work. In nearly all cases, the Branch Committee will meet weekly, but special meetings may be held when needed. In small branches, meetings can be held less frequently according to what may be practical and also depending on the location of the members of the Branch Committee. For obvious reasons, it is good if all members of the Branch Committee can live close enough to the branch to be generally available for such meetings. Minutes should be kept of all Branch Committee meetings. If a member is indisposed or absent, the committee can still function if a majority is present.—See 2:38.

19. The Branch Committee may invite other individuals to come to its meetings for consultation or to present information that will help the committee in reaching decisions.

20. Branch Committee decisions should be unanimous. In any significant case in which a decision is not unanimous, the Branch Committee should write to the appropriate Governing Body committee for direction. Pertinent details should be provided, including an explanation as to why some members of the Branch Committee are for a matter and why some members are against it. Providing the names of those who are for and those who are against a certain decision is helpful. The committee should prepare one letter and send it to

the appropriate Governing Body committee. If individual members wish to submit additional comments, these should be sent along with the letter from the Branch Committee. If needed, the Governing Body committee will seek direction from the entire Governing Body. If, in rare cases, the urgency of a situation does not allow sufficient time for the Branch Committee to send a letter to the Governing Body explaining the details and differing points of view, the majority decision of the Branch Committee should stand until further direction is received.

21. If the Branch Committee determines that a particular decision is of major importance, it should not decide the matter but send it to the appropriate Governing Body committee with its observations and recommendations. (1's. 19:13; Prov. 11:2) This procedure is to be followed even when the committee is unanimous as to how the matter should be handled. When the Branch Committee writes about a weighty matter, the coordinator should make it clear in the letter that the Branch Committee members who were present have read the letter and that they are in agreement with its content. The names of any Branch Committee members who were absent should be indicated as well.—See 2:39; 3:3; 6:40.

22. Unity on Branch Committees:

From time to time, Branch Committee members may experience personal differences with one another. This often occurs when a brother imposes his personal opinion or preference on others. Of course, responsible brothers may occasionally have a difference of opinion. Despite such differences in thinking, they must continue to work together in love and with mutual respect.—Col. 3: 13, 14.

23. Branch Committee coordinators should especially be conscious not to impose their opinion or preference on others in decisions that should be made by the entire Branch Committee. If a

member of the Branch Committee lives outside of Bethel, he should be part of the decision-making process to the extent possible and not simply be informed after the fact about decisions that were made.

24. If the peace and unity of the committee are threatened, each member must examine himself carefully to determine what adjustments he must personally make in order to display "the wisdom from above." (Jas. 3:17, 18) While it is easy to see the faults of others, it takes a mature Christian man to look carefully into the mirror of God's Word and see his own faults clearly and then work to change. (Jas. 1:23-25) While one or more members of the committee may feel that they are not part of the problem, all must be part of the solution. Therefore, each one should supplicate Jehovah for His divine help to resolve the problem, never allowing place for the Devil.—Eph. 4:26, 27.

25. Continue to work together unitedly as a committee in peace and unity, cooperating closely as a body of mature brothers. (Ps. 133:1; Phil. 2:1-4) "Take the lead" in honoring one another. (Rom. 12:10) Much is expected of those who have been put in charge of much. (Luke 12:48b) The Bethel family notices the way you deal with one another and imitates your example, whether positive or negative.

26. Recommendations to the Governing Body: If the Branch Committee wishes to recommend the appointment or deletion of a circuit overseer or a country representative, the form *Recommendations to Governing Body* should be completed and sent to the Governing Body. While the Branch Committee should give careful and prayerful consideration to the qualifications of each brother being recommended (and, if married, the brother's wife), extensive additional comments in a separate letter are not needed unless there is something significant to report about the

brother (or his wife) that the Governing Body should know when considering the recommendation. The wives of such brothers should not be listed on the recommendation form.—See 2:49; 6:139.

27. All members of the Branch Committee who are in agreement should have their names listed at the bottom of the recommendation form. If a member of the Branch Committee was not present when the recommendations were considered, then the word "absent" should be shown next to that brother's name at the bottom of the recommendation form. A copy of the form will be returned to the branch office if the appointments and/or deletions are approved by the Governing Body.—See 2:30.

28. Appointments and Deletions of Branch and Country Committee Members: It is preferred that brothers being considered for appointment to the Branch or Country committee attend Gilead School before the recommendation is made. In the case of Bethel brothers with such potential who are not able to read, write, and speak English fluently, such brothers and their wives, if married, could be invited to attend a future class of the School for Kingdom Evangelizers so that their potential can be further evaluated and their spirituality deepened. If a branch visit is planned in the coming months, it is usually best to discuss recommendations about prospective committee members with the headquarters representative before submitting a recommendation form to the Governing Body. In addition to the recommendation form, the Branch Committee should supply the Governing Body with a covering letter explaining the reasons for the recommendation and, if available, the headquarters representative's comments.

29. A newly appointed Branch or Country committee member who is fluent in English and, if married, whose wife is also fluent in English will be scheduled by the Service Committee to

attend a future class of the School for Branch Committee Members and Their Wives.

30. Appointments and Deletions of Circuit Overseers: See 6:99, 137-139, 148-154 with regard to the qualifications and training of prospective circuit overseers. In cases of death, judicial action, pregnancy, or resignation for health reasons, the Branch Committee is authorized to process the deletion. Thereafter, the Governing Body should be informed of the deletion on the next recommendation form that is submitted. For all other reasons, the Branch Committee should submit to the Governing Body the usual form with a covering letter explaining the recommendation to delete a circuit overseer. The Branch Committee must await approval from the Governing Body before informing him about his appointment or deletion.—See 2:26-27.

31. Know the Organization: Branch Committee members, whether in a large or a small branch, should seek to become acquainted with all the operations carried on at the branch. They should research how the work can be done in the most effective and beneficial way and do all they reasonably can to help it to be done in that way. A Branch Committee should know if the brothers are accomplishing the best work they can and, if they are not, the committee may be able to show them how to do better. The members of the Bethel family should love their work and want to see it improve and increase.

32. Branch Committee members should also be interested in all facets of the Kingdom work in the field and should seek to expand the preaching work and carry it out in the most effective way.

33. Communication During Difficult Times: If a country should become isolated by war or other adverse conditions and it is impossible, at least for a time, to have any communication

with the Governing Body, the Branch Committee will carry on in looking after Jehovah's sheep. Especially in a time of trouble, it is important for the sheep to have spiritual food and guidance. Encouragement should be given them to have regular meetings and continue worshipping Jehovah. If conditions allow, publications will be provided. If new publications are not available, direction can be given to review past publications and to study the Bible itself, not forsaking assembling together, even though it may be in small groups.—Heb. 10:24, 25.

34. If conditions develop to the point that any members of the Branch Committee are taken away, those who remain should consider the qualifications of other elders who have proved themselves and have years of experience in the work and, if there is a possibility of communication, make the recommendation of these to serve as replacement Branch Committee members. If communication with the Governing Body is not possible, the replacement elders can be asked to serve temporarily, and they can be made familiar with the functions of the branch organization and share in the shepherding of the flock. Every effort should be made to have committee meetings from time to time, depending on the conditions. If any individual member of the Branch Committee should find himself under surveillance and it is not advisable for him to try to meet with other members of the committee, he may be able to send word to them concerning his situation. In that event, another elder may be asked to step in temporarily to share in the activities of the committee. If conditions develop to the point that it is impossible to hold meetings because the committee has been scattered, then each individual should continue to do what he can to shepherd the flock, having in mind what Jesus said as recorded at John 10:11-15 and remembering to seek the guidance of Jehovah through prayer.

35. Every effort should be made to communicate with the Governing Body if conditions will allow and if it will not jeopardize the interests of the work. The Branch Committee in each land will know what the circumstances are and will seek the guidance of Jehovah in making a decision as to what is the best course of action at the moment. The Governing Body desires to receive the reports and news concerning Christians scattered throughout the world, but because difficult conditions may develop, these provisions are set forth in connection with the functioning of the Branch Committee.

36. It will be practical if communications sent to the Governing Body are in English. Circumstances in some lands may prevent this. If one who knows English is taken away, the Governing Body will be pleased to receive communications in any language.

37. Country Committees: The Governing Body may determine that a Country Committee should be established in certain lands to work under the oversight of a Branch Committee. A Country Committee is composed of mature Christian elders appointed by the Governing Body. Usually the recommendations for Country Committee members are made by the Branch Committee. The brothers on the Country Committee are responsible for the administration of the office, Bethel Home, remote translation offices, and literature depots in the country where they serve, as well as for handling correspondence, finances, and reports. Even if there is no office in a particular country because of legal restrictions, the Governing Body may appoint a Country Committee to assist a Branch Committee to care for the Kingdom work in that land.

38. The Governing Body designates one brother to serve as the Country Committee coordinator. That brother is responsible for coordinating the daily routine of work. A chairman will serve

in a rotational arrangement for a period of a year, following the same pattern as that for a Branch Committee. Generally, a Country Committee will meet each week, or perhaps every second week, depending on matters needing attention.—See 2:16-18.

39. While a Country Committee should be guided by the same Scriptural procedures and policies established for Branch Committees, it must remember that it does not have the same authority as a Branch Committee. Therefore, the Country Committee members should be modest and work cooperatively with the overseeing Branch Committee for the advancement of the Kingdom work in the country where they serve. (Prov. 11:2; 15:22) Any major problems or questions that the Country Committee cannot resolve in line with *Branch Organization* or other policy materials should be referred to the Branch Committee. The Country Committee will contact the Branch Committee if there is a disagreement about how a matter should be handled, even as a Branch Committee inquires of various Governing Body committees when the brothers on the Branch Committee have differing viewpoints on how something should be done. (See 2:20-21.) The overseeing Branch Committee should feel free to provide the Governing Body and its committees with supplemental comments or observations it wishes to make with regard to recommendations being made by a Country Committee.

40. A Country Committee is authorized to answer questions that local elders and circuit overseers may submit in writing to the office regarding judicial and other congregation or circuit matters. However, if there is any uncertainty as to how a complicated or delicate matter should be handled, the Country Committee should communicate with the overseeing Branch Committee.

41. Country Committees may arrange for locations and times for circuit assemblies and regional conventions. The

Country Committee may care for the selection of convention and assembly speakers as is done by Branch Committees.—See Chapter 7.

42. With regard to appointing or deleting special pioneers, the Country Committee is to make its recommendations to the overseeing Branch Committee and await its approval. Whether the Country Committee will tabulate the field service reports or send them directly to the Branch Committee for handling will be determined by the overseeing Branch Committee. Literature distribution to the congregations should be handled as directed by the Branch Committee.

43. The overseeing Branch Committee will forward to the Governing Body any recommendations submitted by the Country Committee for the appointment or deletion of circuit overseers.

44. The general oversight of missionaries and missionary homes is under the direction of the Country Committee. However, such problems as illness and leave of absence and any difficulties that require attention by a Governing Body committee should be reported to the Branch Committee with the recommendations of the Country Committee. The Branch Committee, in turn, will write to the appropriate Governing Body committee, providing full details.

45. The handling of legal matters and the registration of legal entities will be under the direction of the Branch Committee. However, the Country Committee will be consulted as needed.

46. All correspondence from the Country Committee intended for other branch or country offices is to be sent to the overseeing Branch Committee for forwarding. When necessary, the Country Committee may write a letter to the Governing Body or to one of its committees. However, the letter should first be sent to the Branch Committee so that, if necessary, the Branch Committee may add its comments before forwarding the letter to world headquarters.

47. In a rare situation in which communication with the Branch Committee is not possible, it may be necessary for the Country Committee to send information directly to world headquarters or to other branch offices. In cases where communication with the Branch Committee or with headquarters is not possible, the Country Committee will give the needed supervision to the Kingdom work until conditions return to normal and contact with the Branch Committee or headquarters can resume. If there are any relief measures to be taken in behalf of the brothers, the Country Committee will give the needed oversight, bearing in mind the direction that is provided herein related to such aid.—See 3:17.

48. Country Representatives: In countries where there are a significant number of publishers but where there is no Branch Committee or Country Committee, three qualified elders are appointed by the Governing Body to serve as country representatives. As a group, the country representatives serve as advisers, helping the Branch Committee to stay in close touch with the local situation in the lands that the branch office oversees. The brothers serving as country representatives are not considered a Country Committee and do not function in any supervisory capacity. Country representatives do not qualify to attend the School for Branch Committee Members and Their Wives. Nevertheless, the Branch Committee should **view them as a helpful resource and periodically inquire of them**, perhaps sending a list of questions for them to consider. (Prov. 15:22) The country representatives should be discerning men who can provide meaningful input on the Kingdom work and local needs in the country where they live. (Prov. 27:23; Acts 6:3) Their input will be especially helpful when they notice conditions or trends that endanger the brothers or that threaten the Kingdom work in the country. Those recommended could include special pioneers or circuit overseers. Elders who formerly served on a

Branch Committee or a Country Committee in that land may be particularly qualified. It is preferred that at least one of the country representatives be native to the country. In a country with a remote translation office, one of the three country representatives might include the language overseer, the maintenance overseer, or the home overseer.

49. Recommendations and deletions of country representatives are submitted to the Governing Body using the form *Recommendations to Governing Body*. (See 2: 26.) One of the three brothers should be recommended to serve as the chairman of the group. Once the Governing Body confirms the appointment or deletion of a country representative, the Branch Committee should update the Admin person record to reflect the start or stop date of this role. The branch office should provide newly appointed country representatives with a letter that explains their appointment and the basic operation of the group as well as the names and contact information of the other two country representatives.

50. The country representatives may meet at a convenient time and place whenever there is a need or as directed by the Branch Committee. The group is not given permanent office space or computer equipment. Their periodic meetings should be arranged at any convenient location that is available, such as a Kingdom Hall, Assembly Hall, or the home of one of the brothers as long as confidentiality can be maintained. Such meetings should not interfere with normally scheduled meetings or assemblies. Upon request, the branch office may reimburse reasonable travel expenses for country representatives to participate in their periodic meetings. The group should open and close their meetings with prayer. A typed report, usually no more than one to two pages in length and addressed to the Branch Committee, should be sufficient to convey their key observations. The chairman of the group should keep a confidential file of these reports for two years. Reports older than two years should be destroyed, since the branch office will have its copies on file.

CONFIDENTIAL

CHAPTER 3

COORDINATORS' COMMITTEE

CORRESPONDENCE AND COMMUNICATION

1. This section provides direction for handling correspondence and communication between branch offices and with world headquarters. For guidelines on the handling of correspondence with congregations and individuals in the field, see Chapter 6.
2. **Branch Committee's Role:** A Branch Committee should feel free to ask the Governing Body or one of its committees any question related to the Kingdom work in the territory under the oversight of the branch office. It is best that such questions be expressed clearly and carefully in writing rather than by telephone. The Branch Committee should ensure that it has an arrangement for handling correspondence efficiently.
3. The Branch Committee coordinator should be especially attentive to matters sent to and from the Governing Body and its committees. Good communication between the coordinator and other Branch Committee members is essential so that all are involved and are aware of direction being provided. Numbered letters sent to the Governing Body or its committees should be signed by the coordinator on behalf of the Branch Committee. (See 2:20-21.) Correspondence should not be delayed unnecessarily. The urgency of some matters may require that another committee member sign the letter if the Branch Committee coordinator is not available. See Chapter 2 for more information regarding correspondence sent to the Governing Body and its committees.
4. Branch offices are authorized to write to other branch offices and to headquarters. However, branch offices should not write to offices under the oversight of *another* Branch Committee, such as country offices, translation offices, literature depots, and so forth. In such cases, the correspondence should be sent to the branch office that has oversight. Country offices are authorized to write to the branch office that oversees their work.
5. **Desk Symbols:** If many people in the branch or country office prepare correspondence to be sent to other departments, to the field, to other branch offices, or to headquarters, it may be practical for the branch office to use desk symbols on such correspondence. The use of desk symbols serves to help the branch office identify the author and/or his secretary who prepared a particular letter or memorandum. When a reply is received that refers to the correspondence by desk symbol(s) and date, the reply can be promptly routed to the appropriate desk. The Branch Committee may determine the desk symbol system that works best locally. No more than three letters should be combined to form each desk symbol, such as ABA, SCA, HID. The Branch or Country committee should see that a confidential listing of the branch office's desk symbols is kept up-to-date. The desk symbol list is to be provided only to those who need to consult the listing for their Bethel work. It is not to be distributed to anyone outside of Bethel.
6. **Correspondence Standards:** All correspondence should be dated and include the desk symbols of the writer(s) as well as a subject or a regarding ("Re:") line. Since correspondence is sent electronically via the Branch File Transfer (BFT) system, it is not necessary to indicate at the top "Via BFT." However, if it is necessary to send the correspondence

by more than one means, this should be indicated at the top, for example, "Via Hard Copy and BFT." (See 3:16) If the correspondence is truly urgent or time-sensitive, this should be clearly indicated under the date. If the subject involves another country or geographic location, this should be indicated at the beginning of the subject line. For example, if the Russia branch office writes about a matter in Belarus, the subject line should commence with "Belarus—" followed by the subject.

7. When only a very brief reply to correspondence is needed, it is appropriate to reply using a brief note at the top of the received correspondence. This note could convey an approval, a confirmation, or other minor detail. The note should show the intended recipient, those being copied, and the sender, as well as the desk symbol(s) and date.

8. File Naming: A numbered letter or memorandum and its attachments must be given a proper file name so that the documents are handled together when received through BFT. Files produced using the Correspondence Module in Admin are named in accord with the standards set forth in this chapter. A word or brief phrase may be added *after* the required file-name prefix. Care should be taken so that the file name does not reveal confidential information. In most cases, correspondence and the associated attachments should not be sent in a compressed folder.

9. Numbered Letters: All correspondence **between a Branch Committee and the Governing Body or one of the Governing Body committees** should be sent by means of numbered letters. [See Chart 3.1.] Branch Committees should address a numbered letter to one Governing Body committee only. The letter number, letter date, and desk symbols serve as a helpful reference to specific correspondence. For numbered letters sent to the Governing Body and its committees, each branch office uses a number series that starts at 101 and

continues sequentially until 9999. The letter number series is not reset or restarted each year. It is reset to 101 after letter number 9999 has been used. Unique letter numbers will be used on letters *sent to* Branch Committees but will not necessarily be sequential. When the Governing Body or one of the Governing Body committees sends the same letter (a circular letter) to various branch offices, the same letter number will be used. Additionally, to identify easily circular letters from headquarters, the letter number will begin with a "C-" prefix, such as "No. C-1234P."

10. File Names for Numbered Letters: The required file-name prefix for numbered letters is FROM+TO+LETTER NUMBER. FROM represents the *three-letter code* of the sending office. TO represents the *three-letter code* of the receiving office. For example, the proper file name for a letter numbered 2345 from the Germany branch office to the Service Committee at headquarters is DEUWHQ2345.docx. The file name of any associated attachments to a numbered letter are appended with letters "a," "b," and so forth. In the example cited above, two attachments would have such file names as DEUWHQ2345a.docx and DEUWHQ2345b.pdf.

11. Memorandums: Correspondence **between branch offices** is sent by means of memorandums, not numbered letters. Memorandums are also used for correspondence **between branch offices and headquarters departments**. [See Chart 3.1.] The word "MEMORANDUM" needs to be shown above the name of the sending branch. In addition, for the recipient, the department should be specified under the name of the branch, for example, "Attention: Shipping Office." A memorandum does not need to be signed by the Branch Committee coordinator.

12. File Names for Memorandums: The required file-name prefix for memorandums is FROM+TO+DESK SYM-

BOL+SEQUENTIAL NUMBER. FROM represents the *three-letter code* of the sending office. TO represents the *three-letter code* of the receiving office. SEQUENTIAL NUMBER represents the number of the memorandum sent on a given day. For example, the proper file name for the first memorandum that Desk AY at the Brazil branch sends to the Art Department at headquarters on a given day is BRAWHQAY01.docx. The file name of any associated attachments to a memorandum are appended with letters "a," "b," and so forth. In the example cited above, two attachments would have such file names as BRAWHQAY01a.docx and BRAWHQAY01b.pdf.

13. Branch File Transfer: BFT is the principal means by which branch offices and headquarters departments send and receive correspondence and other electronic files. It is not a correspondence tracking system. Most branch offices find it advantageous to use a correspondence tracking system, such as the Correspondence Module in Admin.

14. E-Mail: In addition to the use of numbered letters and memorandums, departments at headquarters and at the branch offices may be approved by oversight to use e-mail to communicate directly with departments or individuals in other lands about *technical and routine matters*. However, e-mail does not replace numbered letters or memorandums. Recommendations, direction, and decisions are to be communicated through numbered letters or memorandums, as explained above. In most cases, authorized e-mail communications between departments or individuals serve the purpose of expediting the clear communication of technical and routine details having to do with previously approved projects. If such e-mail communication is approved between a department at headquarters and at the branch offices or between branch offices, oversight should ensure that such e-mail communications are limited to their authorized technical purpose.

E-mail should not be used by anyone to bypass official communication. A department overseer should be sure that his oversight on the Branch Committee is kept abreast of the nature of work-related e-mail communications that he or others in the department send to anyone outside the branch office or to those at other branch offices or at headquarters.—See 6:44.

15. Telephone Calls: The telephone may be used to communicate with headquarters or with another branch office if necessary. This is especially true when a sudden emergency or other urgent matter arises. Usually, urgent matters handled over the telephone should be followed up with official communication in a numbered letter or a memorandum. For technical and routine matters, the guidelines outlined above with regard to the use of e-mail also apply to telephone calls. Department overseers should authorize any international phone calls before they are made.

16. Faxes and Hard-Copy Mail: Whenever possible, correspondence and attachments should be sent electronically only through BFT, as this expedites the handling and assists in the tracking and routing of items once they have been received. If BFT is temporarily unavailable and emergency communication is needed, fax transmissions may be used. Correspondence sent by fax should be resent using BFT as soon as it is available. It is preferred that hard-copy correspondence be scanned and then sent electronically. If a matter must be sent by hard copy and BFT, please indicate this at the top of the correspondence as described in 3:6.

DISASTER RELIEF AND EMERGENCIES

17. From time to time, emergency situations arise throughout the world. Sometimes there are violent storms, damaging floods, or strong earthquakes. At other times brothers may be forced to flee from their homes because of

warfare or mob violence. When such problems occur, the Branch Committee should communicate with the Coordinators' Committee to explain what is happening and set forth recommendations as to what needs to be done. On occasion, it may not be possible for the branch office to communicate with the Coordinators' Committee. Or a need may suddenly arise to do something for brothers affected by a disaster. In such circumstances, the branch office is permitted to spend up to USD 5,000 immediately to provide temporary relief and assistance to brothers involved in a major disaster. When funds are spent, an explanation should be included in the letter sent to the Coordinators' Committee. The letter should state what the local brothers are able to do and what materials or facilities are available to take care of the immediate needs of the brothers affected. Further instructions are found in the *Disaster Relief Guidelines*.—See 2:47.

18. Safety of Those in Foreign Service:

If such emergencies as civil unrest, acts of terrorism, or war threaten the safety and well-being of foreign nationals, the Branch Committee must be alert and quick to provide practical assistance and clear direction. The Branch Committee must take a special interest in the welfare of all those who are members of the Worldwide Order. If the Branch Committee determines that there is an urgent need to evacuate special full-time servants in foreign service to a safer location or to relocate them, the branch office should immediately contact the Coordinators' Committee by letter or by telephone and explain the situation, setting forth specific recommendations. The Coordinators' Committee will consult with the Personnel and Service committees and provide further direction. If it is not possible for the Branch Committee to communicate with the Coordinators' Committee, then the Branch Committee should do what is needed to protect the lives and safety of those in foreign service. A re-

port on what transpired should be provided to the Coordinators' Committee as soon as possible. For these reasons, each branch office should have and periodically review an emergency action plan. (Prov. 21:5) The branch should maintain up-to-date contact information for all of those in special full-time service so that they can be reached quickly in an emergency. While some in foreign service may feel either that they should or that they should not relocate or evacuate, ultimately the decision is a personal one. No one should judge others in this regard. (Matt. 7:1; 10:23; Rom. 14:10, 19; Gal. 6:5) Nevertheless, in most cases, it is best that Christians quickly heed the warnings and direction issued by the secular authorities and the responsible elders during times of civil unrest or emergency.—Rom. 13:1; Heb. 13:17.

LEGAL DEPARTMENT

19. Official opposition to the advancement of Kingdom interests, particularly the preaching of the good news, is to be expected. As foretold, there are those who 'frame trouble in the name of the law' and who resort to the courts in an effort to silence the spread of the Bible's lifesaving message. (Ps. 94:20; Matt. 10:16-19) While the theocratic organization does not need legal status to form congregations or engage in the field ministry, being legally recognized affords a degree of protection, which is why efforts are made to 'defend and legally establish the good news.'—Phil. 1:7.

20. The Branch Committee should promptly inform the Coordinators' Committee of serious legal challenges, providing dates and times of occurrences, names of individuals involved, and a thorough but concise explanation. This includes outlining what the charges against the brothers may be and sending a copy of the laws involved, translated into English. The Branch Committee should not assume that the Coordinators' Committee is up-to-date on the situation in a given country just because

there was correspondence with world headquarters about the situation in the past.

21. It is advisable to have a Legal Department in larger branch offices, particularly where printing is done or where there is significant ongoing legal opposition to theocratic activities. If possible, it is good to have a licensed attorney serving with the department. It is the responsibility of the entire Branch Committee to be aware of legal challenges to our worship.—Esther 3:5-15.

22. When legal controversies arise, the branch Legal Department may consult, if necessary, with a lawyer who is not serving at Bethel. The lawyer's opinion and recommendation should be included in the letter sent to the Coordinators' Committee. If it seems necessary to hire a lawyer, the lawyer should explain the legal remedies available, the likelihood of a favorable result, how long it will take, and an estimate of his costs. In explaining matters to the Coordinators' Committee, the Branch Committee should outline the lawyer's opinion on whether a favorable outcome will be achieved, his reasoning, and the recommendation of the Branch Committee.

23. To minimize the use of non-Witness attorneys, it is beneficial to maintain a list of brothers and sisters in the field who are lawyers. Legal matters can periodically be referred to spiritually qualified attorneys who are willing and feel privileged to help. They are generally pleased to assist without charge.

24. Action against Jehovah's Witnesses is often preceded by negative propaganda in the media and derogatory statements by government officials. The Branch Committee should promptly inform the Coordinators' Committee if events indicate that the authorities are considering the imposition of restrictions or an outright ban on true worship. With comments from the branch office and the help of the WHQ Legal Department, the Coordinators' Commit-

tee will prepare an approach to the appropriate officials. Written materials explaining our activities and refuting falsehoods may be prepared. The objective is to inform responsible officials of the true position of Jehovah's Witnesses. To ensure that the best approach is made, the branch office should always communicate with the Coordinators' Committee before setting up such meetings. Any meetings that are approved to be held with officials should be cared for by a member of the Branch Committee and, if available, someone from the branch Legal Department.

25. Most governments have committed themselves to respecting human rights, including freedom of worship. (Rev. 12:16) National and international organizations monitor governmental compliance with these commitments. It may be helpful to inform such agencies about the arrests of publishers, lawsuits, or proposed legislation against true worship. The Branch Committee should communicate with the Coordinators' Committee before doing so, explaining which organization is to be approached. A draft of what the branch office wishes to submit should be sent to the Coordinators' Committee. The Coordinators' Committee will then decide whether the approach should be made.

26. The branch office should always ask for any court action to be delayed or adjourned to allow ample time for a complete report to be sent to the Coordinators' Committee and to allow time to receive instructions from headquarters. If possible, a two-month delay or extension should be requested.

27. In the event of an adverse ruling or decision, the Branch Committee should immediately inform the Coordinators' Committee and specify the time limit for making an appeal. The Coordinators' Committee will want to know the opinion of the branch Legal Department about the advisability of appealing, the reasons for or against making an appeal,

as well as the costs. The letter to the Coordinators' Committee should also state any possible negative effects on the legal status of the Kingdom work if the matter is not appealed or if the appeal is lost.

28. If the Branch Committee does not have time to write to the Coordinators' Committee to receive instructions because of a deadline that cannot be extended, a legal update should be provided as soon as possible. If necessary, the Branch Committee coordinator or another member of the Branch Committee may telephone headquarters about the matter.

29. If the Branch Committee believes that an action taken against true worship should be publicized, the branch office should write to the Coordinators' Committee with a recommendation of what could be prepared, making sure that all of the facts are fully substantiated.

30. Legal Status: Obtaining legal status or registration facilitates the entry of missionaries, the organization of assemblies, the importation of literature, the entitlement to tax exemptions, and other benefits. The Branch Committee should give careful attention to obtaining and maintaining legal registration. Of course, the organization will never compromise principles of pure worship merely to obtain legal status. Attention should be given to the type of legal status being sought. Some religions have a very favorable status, whereas others are merely tolerated. It is necessary to examine carefully the law in each country to determine which form of legal status would be most beneficial for theocratic purposes.

31. Legal Entities and the Worldwide Order: Branch Committee members should have a clear understanding of the relationship among the Governing Body, the Branch Committee, the legal entities used by branch offices, and the Worldwide Order of Special Full-

Time Servants of Jehovah's Witnesses ("Worldwide Order").

32. The Governing Body has delegated a measure of oversight of the spiritual and material welfare of "the flock of God" to Branch Committees throughout the world. These Branch Committees also oversee administrative and legal activities of the organization in their designated territories. Of course, all Branch Committees serve under the spiritual direction of the Governing Body.—See *w01* 1/15 pp. 28-31.

33. Branch Committees are encouraged to register and use a recognized legal entity to carry on the legal affairs of the branch office. Depending on the local laws and circumstances, a branch office may need to use more than one legal entity to further the work in its territory. Any recommended adjustments in the use of legal entities are to be presented to the Coordinators' Committee. This would include recommendations for the appointment or deletion of directors or officers of legal entities. Some countries do not allow the registration of religions or the formation of a legal entity of a religious nature. In such countries, it may be necessary to use a legal entity that is of a general nonprofit nature or, in a rare instance, a for-profit nature. In either case, the Branch Committee must not lose sight of the primary objective to spread the good news of God's Kingdom under Christ Jesus. Our principal activities as an organization are religious even though some aspects may be viewed as educational or charitable in nature.

34. Members of the Worldwide Order serve at all branch offices. The Worldwide Order provides ministers for the legal entity or entities used by the branch offices to carry out the spiritual activities of Jehovah's Witnesses. (Matt. 24:14; 28:19, 20; Acts 1:8; Rom. 12:1) For this reason, it is important that Branch Committees understand what the Worldwide Order is and the relationship between it

and the legal entities branch offices may use.

35. The Worldwide Order is an unincorporated association made up of all those in special full-time service throughout the world. Members of the Worldwide Order are baptized ministers in special full-time service who perform whatever assignment they receive from the Worldwide Order. Each member of the Worldwide Order signs a Vow of Obedience and Poverty ("Vow"), which is a voluntary commitment made by each member.

36. Members of the Worldwide Order are not compensated and do not receive in-kind benefits for any services they perform. The support a member receives is based on the member's commitment to the Order and is not related to any service performed or the nature of any assignment. Members of the Worldwide Order receive food, shelter, and other basic necessities. Regardless of the nature of their privilege of service, all receive modest, yet appropriate, support. In view of the foregoing, the activities of any legal entity used by the Branch Committee are not to be viewed or regulated as a "commercial" enterprise or as involving an employer/employee relationship between any legal entity and members of the Worldwide Order.

37. At times, authorities attempt to categorize the endeavors of those in special full-time service as 'secular work.' As Christians, we do have a "work" commissioned to us. (John 4:34; 5:17; Acts 13:2; 1 Cor. 15:58; 16:10; 2 Tim. 4:5) However, members of the Worldwide Order are motivated, not by financial gain, but by the desire to accomplish the will of Jehovah and Jesus Christ in helping all "to attain to repentance." (2 Pet. 3:9) Even so, in keeping with Jesus' admonition, Branch Committee members and those who serve under their oversight need to exercise caution when asked to describe the nature of our activities. (Matt. 10:16) While we do en-

gage in "work," even as Jesus and his first-century disciples did, we are certainly not secularly employed or motivated.

38. If a Branch Committee feels that it should describe itself, its legal entities, or the Worldwide Order differently than set forth above, it must first provide details of the proposed adjustment to the Governing Body in order to receive direction.—See 6:50.

39. The Branch Committee should consider whether to register Jehovah's Witnesses as a local entity. However, registration as a local branch of the Pennsylvania corporation may be preferable. Regimes in developing countries are less likely to expropriate property belonging to an American corporation. In other countries, having legal ties to an American legal entity is not desirable. If the Branch Committee recommends pursuing legal registration in a particular country, the details should be sent to the Coordinators' Committee. The WHQ Legal Department will provide assistance in preparing a charter and bylaws needed for registration.

40. There may be other laws in the country regulating those who transact business on behalf of local or foreign corporations. To ensure that the branch office is operating legally, a lawyer should be consulted so that the legal requirements are known. Each member of the Branch Committee should be familiar with the laws of the country as they pertain to corporations or business matters.

41. Power of Attorney: This is a legal document authorizing an individual to act as a legal agent or representative of another person or legal entity (such as the Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society of Pennsylvania). The Power of Attorney names an individual to handle 'necessary business matters.' (Acts 6:3) The Branch Committee may write to the Coordinators' Committee if a Power of Attorney is needed to

conduct corporation business, to register the corporation, or to obtain legal recognition as a branch of a foreign corporation.

42. In some countries, the law requires anyone holding a Power of Attorney to register it with the government. If that is the case, it should be done, thus avoiding the severe complications for not complying with such laws. Each member of a Branch Committee should be aware of the legal requirements regarding Powers of Attorney, including time periods for renewal or expiration.

43. Lawsuits for Libel, Damages, or Injunctive Relief: Before initiating any such legal actions, the Branch Committee must receive approval from the Coordinators' Committee. The recommendation from the Branch Committee should include a description of available legal remedies, the cost for such legal action (including estimated attorney's fees), an estimate of the likely time from the initiation of the action to the conclusion, and the likelihood of success and the recovery of an award. In libel actions, the Branch Committee should consider whether the suit will further advertise the false accusations. If it is believed that failure to initiate a lawsuit will lead to other difficulties, these concerns should be explained.

44. Printed Matter Against Jehovah's Witnesses: As a general policy, the organization does not publish responses or retaliate legally if another organization or individual circulates printed matter that contains falsehoods about Jehovah's Witnesses. It is usually best to concentrate on the positive activity of Kingdom preaching. If the Branch Committee thinks that the wise course is to take steps to counteract negative reports that may adversely affect our activities, the committee should set forth recommendations to the Coordinators' Committee.—See 6:19.

45. Refusal of Blood Transfusions: If our brothers' refusal of blood trans-

fusions is being disregarded or overridden by health-care providers, legal action may be warranted. If the Branch Committee recommends such, a complete overview of the matter should be presented to the Coordinators' Committee. The recommendation should clearly state what is hoped to be accomplished by taking legal action. We are not inclined to get involved if a favorable result will not help the brotherhood in general.

46. Child-Custody and Visitation Disputes: At times, publishers are involved in child-custody or visitation disputes in which our beliefs are attacked. Unfavorable child-custody decisions in which our beliefs and activities are misrepresented can adversely affect our reputation in the community, even our legal status. With prior approval of and subsequent review by the Coordinators' Committee, some branch offices have prepared and made available information to assist publishers whose beliefs are attacked in such disputes.

47. Personal Decisions: The Legal Department at the branch office is set up to assist the Branch Committee in "the defending and legally establishing of the good news." It is inappropriate for the Legal Department to take time from these "more important things" to assist individuals with their personal legal matters. (Phil. 1:7, 10) The Legal Department should limit its work to legal matters affecting the advancement of Kingdom interests rather than personal requests for legal advice or services.

48. Protecting the Organization's Copyrights: The organization has a long-standing policy of copyrighting its publications. Copyright is a tool that can be used to protect dedicated materials from being misused, such as by apostates or false religious organizations as well as by those who attempt to commercialize our artwork, photographs, or text. We do permit some uses of our copyrighted material, such as use or re-

production by Jehovah's Witnesses for the personal use of family members, use of the organization's artwork by the congregation at a Kingdom Hall, and use by authors and others for educational purposes with specific permission granted on a case-by-case basis. However, approval is not given for the general or widespread distribution of our publications, including artwork, photographs, and text, for posting on the Internet or any other electronic network or for reproduction or distribution in exchange for money. If the branch office learns that the organization's copyrighted material is being misused, the Branch Committee should write to the Coordinators' Committee, providing full details, including the action that the committee recommends be taken against the violator.

49. Tax Matters: Although many countries provide tax exemptions for religious entities, some countries do not. Tax exemptions are generally created by law and are usually not a legal right. Where required to do so by Caesar, legal entities used by branch offices should pay the taxes legally required of them, even if other religious entities do not follow the law. Conversely, legal entities used by branch offices should not pay taxes where there is an accepted legal basis for not doing so. Every Branch Committee should take full advantage of any legal exemption from taxation. Branch Committees should keep in mind that how they handle tax and legal matters (including the tax or legal status of those in the Worldwide Order) could have implications for other branch offices, the worldwide organization, and the Worldwide Order. In addition, individuals engaged full-time in religious activities may be entitled to tax exemptions. Such exemptions relieve the branch offices of some financial obligations and indirectly constitute legal recognition of our activities. The Branch Committee should keep the Coordinators' Committee informed when exemptions currently enjoyed by the organization or mem-

bers of the Worldwide Order may be in danger of being lost.

50. To respond effectively in times of emergency or war, Branch Committee members should be familiar with all decrees affecting our work and the operation of the branch office. The Branch Committee should watch carefully so that the work will be protected and the brothers will be given necessary direction. The Branch Committee should be alert as to what is going on in the country and keep the Coordinators' Committee duly informed.

51. Keep Proclaiming the Good News:

In some places, opposers make every effort to stop the Kingdom work. Nevertheless, true Christians continue preaching, even if this means doing so in a quiet manner. If literature is not available, the brothers can talk about the truth using only the Bible. Dedicated servants of Jehovah should be thoroughly acquainted with the Word of God so that they can continue to preach no matter what circumstances might arise.

NEWS SERVICE AND PUBLIC INFORMATION

52. It is beneficial for the branch office to establish good relations with the public news media wherever possible and practical. Branch Committees should be prepared to provide accurate information about our activities and beliefs to newspapers, magazines, radio, and television where appropriate.—Col. 4:5, 6.

53. Office of Public Information (OPI):

This office at world headquarters works under the direction of the Coordinators' Committee to publicize accurate information about and to correct misconceptions and prejudices about our organization and work. OPI produces content about our worldwide activities in the form of news releases, video news releases (VNRs), and other related materials for the Newsroom section of jw.org. Rather than focusing

primarily on human rights and legal matters, these news items highlight positive developments that have broad appeal to the general public and the media, such as Witnesses' receiving official recognition for fine conduct or another significant achievement publicly acknowledged by the local community. (Please review our letter dated HCA: NC April 12, 2012, No. C-6266C.) This office makes direct contact with media professionals, academics, and other non-Witnesses to provide this information. Additionally, if a branch office needs help with media-related issues, the Branch Committee may submit the details of the situation to the Coordinators' Committee. If there is a major development or a fast-breaking news item in the branch territory about which it may be helpful to have accurate information posted on jw.org (particularly in the case of a disaster or other emergency), the Branch Committee may submit a request to the Coordinators' Committee and include documented, relevant details about the matter. OPI may prepare fast-breaking news items as "News Alerts" for the Newsroom.—See 6:19.

54. Public Information Desk (PID):

This desk is responsible for providing major media outlets in the branch territory, such as national networks or newspapers and academic professionals, with an accurate picture of our beliefs and activities. They should be referred to the media resources and other official information available on jw.org. The PID should also be used to correct misconceptions and prejudices about us and our work to the extent possible. Discernment should be used in deciding whether or to what extent inquiries should be answered, especially if the reporter has a reputation for being antagonistic toward our work. The PID should also periodically provide information to OPI on positive news stories related to Jehovah's Witnesses in the branch territory. The PID may subsequently work directly with OPI in verifying the details of these stories to facilitate OPI's preparation of a news release and/or video news release (VNR).

The PID will obtain approval from the Branch Committee to forward the information and related materials—including video clips—to OPI as source material. Additionally, those assigned to the PID should have a working knowledge of both English and the language used by local media, so as to assist those who translate materials appearing in the English-language Newsroom as needed. News items currently appearing on the Newsroom landing page on jw.org can serve as a guide to the PID for ideas on positive news stories. Each Branch Committee should appoint a brother at the branch to care for media matters and oversee the PID. The brother should be humble as well as capable and tactful. He should have a good knowledge of the truth. He should be able to articulate our beliefs clearly in a personable yet professional manner, particularly when dealing with non-Witnesses. The brother should be prepared to care for news interviews and other inquiries from media outlets, serving as the official spokesman for Jehovah's Witnesses in the branch territory with the full knowledge and support of the Branch Committee. He will also serve as the permanent branch media contact for news releases prepared by OPI. Please keep OPI informed of the current staffing of the PID and whether it is staffed full- or part-time.

55. News Service Representatives:

A news service representative is selected for each circuit by the circuit overseer. A *Circuit News Service Representative* card (S-304) showing the name and address of this brother is then sent to the branch office to update its file. This brother should be available to provide accurate information to the media. He will cooperate closely with the circuit overseer and the branch office. A regional news service representative may be assigned by the local Convention Committee in harmony with direction from the branch office. It is appropriate for this brother to invite the local media to

report on the convention each year. The Teaching Committee provides an annual news service kit to branch offices for use in connection with regional, national, and international conventions. Ordinarily, no newspaper advertising or radio or television time is used for conventions unless it is free. However, if it seems advisable to pay to publicize our convention activities in the country in some way, the Branch Committee may submit a recommendation to the Teaching Committee.

56. Videos for Use by the Media:

The Teaching and Writing committees have selected certain videos that are especially appropriate for public broadcast. This list is updated from time to time. If a station is willing to broadcast one of our videos, the branch office representative should be sure to review our public broadcasting guidelines with the station management. If the station agrees to adhere to the conditions outlined, a broadcast may be arranged and a copy of the video provided to the station.

57. As a general rule, we avoid controversy when it comes to minor misconceptions that appear in the media. However, if some in the media spread false information of a serious nature about Jehovah's organization, what can be done? The Branch Committee generally knows the situation in the country and will often be able to judge whether it would be wise to try to contact the media and counter the misinformation or to ignore the matter. There is "a time to be silent and a time to speak."—Eccl. 3:7; see *w98* 12/1, pp. 17-18, pars. 15-18.

58. Handling Media-Related Emergencies: In a media-related emergency, such as criminal activity involving Jehovah's Witnesses or a slanderous campaign that could have repercussions on our preaching work, the Branch Committee has the responsibility to handle the matter quickly. It should communicate with the Coordinators' Com-

mittee for suggestions and direction, particularly if it is expected that problems will quickly spread to other countries because of media reports. If slanderous or lying reports appear in the media, it may be appropriate for the PID, in consultation with the branch Legal Department, to review these reports and submit a recommendation to the Branch Committee. The Branch Committee may write to the Coordinators' Committee to provide details on the matter or to request additional direction on pursuing the matter legally. Please note that as an exception, the branch Legal Department should handle media queries related to ongoing court cases or major legal issues involving Jehovah's Witnesses. In these instances, the PID would be consulted as needed and kept informed of the details.

DATA PROTECTION

59. The organization of Jehovah's Witnesses respects individuals' rights of privacy, based on principles set forth in the Bible. The organization recognizes the necessity for open and frank communication and the collection of personal and sensitive personal data in order to administer to the needs of Jehovah's Witnesses and accomplish its religious and charitable activity. The organization also recognizes the corresponding necessity to maintain confidentiality and ensure that information is adequately protected. (Prov. 15:22; 25:9) Confidentiality is highly valued.—Prov. 20:19.

60. Various countries have enacted data protection laws to ensure individuals' rights of privacy. The organization of Jehovah's Witnesses has a long-standing history of respecting privacy rights and maintaining confidentiality, even before the enactment of such data protection laws. The organization will continue to protect information disclosed to it in harmony with its long-standing practice, now recorded in this policy.

61. Scope of Application: This policy applies to the entire organization of

Jehovah's Witnesses, as represented by branch offices located throughout the world.—See 6:19.

62. Data Protection Policy: The organization of Jehovah's Witnesses handles all personal data in accordance with the following principles:

- a. Personal data will be processed in a fair and lawful manner.
- b. Personal data will be collected, processed, and used only to the extent necessary to fulfill Jehovah's Witnesses' religious and charitable purposes.
- c. Personal data will be accurate and kept up-to-date. Any error will be corrected as soon as possible after the organization becomes aware of it.
- d. Personal data will be kept only for as long as is necessary for the legitimate purpose(s) of the organization.
- e. Due consideration will be given to respecting the rights of data subjects.
- f. Appropriate technical and organizational measures will be taken to prevent unauthorized or unlawful disclosure of personal data. All computer-held personal data is held on password protected computers to which only authorized users hold passwords. Offices are locked after office hours and only authorized staff may gain entry.
- g. Personal data will not be transferred between branches unless necessary to accomplish the religious or charitable purposes of the organization of Jehovah's Witnesses, to which all of Jehovah's Witnesses have consented by virtue of their free and willing decision to become Jehovah's Witnesses and identify themselves as such.

63. Rights of the Data Subject:

- a. A data subject's right to the protection of personal and sensitive personal data and to the correction or deletion of personal and sensitive personal data is to be granted according to the practice of Jehovah's Witnesses as set forth in this policy.
- b. Whoever makes a request according to this section must provide sufficient evidence of his identity.
- c. If a data subject requests access to, correction of, or deletion of personal data or sensitive personal data about himself, the organization will fairly consider granting the request by balancing the interests of the individual in gaining access or correcting or deleting data against the legitimate religious interests of the organization, including whether granting the request would endanger the organization's right to religious freedom and practice.
- d. The organization has an interest in permanently maintaining data regarding an individual's status as one of Jehovah's Witnesses. Deleting such information would unduly infringe on the organization's religious beliefs and practices.

64. Right of Appeal: If a person believes that his rights have been infringed, he can appeal to the Branch Committee by means of a written personal letter. The letter must be sent within two weeks of the action that forms the basis of the appeal.

COMPUTER DEPARTMENT

65. The WHQ Computer Department oversees the work of all branch Computer Departments worldwide, under the supervision of the Coordinators' Com-

mittee. This includes setting standards, providing global shared services, specifying new equipment, designing and maintaining computer networks, and supporting commercial enterprise software and software developed by headquarters.

66. The WHQ Computer Department has technicians working under its direction in various branches in order to provide timely assistance to branches around the world. These technicians closely follow the standards and policies that apply to all areas under the supervision of the WHQ Computer Department, such as networking, servers, and software.

67. For detailed information on organizing local computer operations, the Branch Committee and the branch Computer Department should consult *Computer Department Guidelines*.

68. Branch Computer Department Responsibilities: The Branch Committee should appoint a capable, trustworthy brother and perhaps an assistant to oversee the Computer Department. The principal responsibility of the Computer Department is to supply branch departments with computers, servers, software, telephones, radio communication, data communication, telecommunication, and related technologies. In addition, this department provides helpful support to keep equipment in good working order. Most important, it ensures that all the electronic data belonging to the branch is available only to those authorized to use it and is protected against tampering or accidental loss.

69. Standards and Guidelines: In order to maintain reasonable uniformity among branches, headquarters provides standards and technical guidelines. The branch Computer Department should endeavor to keep up-to-date with such information as provided in correspondence to the branches, *Computer Department Guidelines*, and the Technical Support Library located on the Extranet.

There is usually no need for branch members to experiment with or pioneer the use of the latest technologies available; rather, they should concentrate on using what has been approved.

70. If the branch Computer Department feels that it needs assistance in evaluating whether to replace equipment, in using new software, or in similar matters, the branch office may submit a request for help and direction to the WHQ Computer Department.

71. Data Backups and Disaster Recovery: A good data-backup strategy is extremely important and should be viewed as one of the first priorities of the Computer Department. Backup procedures should be performed at least on a daily basis and should be verified periodically by restoring the data to a test computer. At least weekly, backups should be moved to a secure place that is not in the same building as the data being backed up. This ensures that in case of a major disaster, such as a fire or a flood, data could be retrieved and re-installed on new equipment.

72. The Computer Department is responsible for having recovery procedures in place in case critical equipment, such as a server, fails. The procedure will vary according to the size and location of the branch and may include having a limited supply of spare equipment readily available.

73. Approvals: Any purchase of new computer hardware or software that goes beyond normal supplies, such as printer cartridges, and small items, such as memory sticks, needs approval from headquarters. This includes replacements for equipment that is taken out of service because of failure or because of the need for upgrading. Approval is obtained by submitting a *Nonliterature Branch Request*. For a list of recommended equipment, consult the Technical Support Library.

74. Security: Much of the information that is stored electronically is of a

confidential nature. The Branch Committee should have an up-to-date list of all brothers who have access to such data. A meeting at which the importance of confidentiality is emphasized should be attended by each brother who is given such rights. *A branch member may lose his Bethel service privilege if confidential data is accessed or copied without authorization.* All users accessing branch data should first sign the *Watchtower Information Resources Confidentiality Affirmation* (available in the Technical Support Library). If changes are needed for legal reasons, this document may be adjusted by the Branch Committee.

75. The Computer Department is responsible for regular network administration tasks, such as data backup, user and group maintenance, server monitoring, and upgrading. Some network administration tasks require "system administrator" permission to accomplish this work. This type of network permission should be limited to a small number of trusted brothers. For the protection of the branch, local laws may require that such brothers sign a specific nondisclosure agreement. An up-to-date list of all system passwords should be placed in two envelopes, which should then be sealed. One should be securely stored by the overseer of the Computer Department and the other by the coordinator of the Branch Committee. For additional information relating to the security and management of confidential data, see the Information Security and Acceptable Use Policy and the Records Management Policy, both available in the Technical Support Library.

76. Infrastructure: The Computer Department would generally specify, install, and maintain the cabling for the voice and data networks of the branch. The Branch Committee may decide that another department, such as Maintenance, should handle cable installation. The Computer Department will set up and maintain any routers, switches,

and servers. The standards for setting up and maintaining a network and the servers on it are contained in the Technical Support Library. All design, specifications, operation, and maintenance of the computer data network should be coordinated by the Computer Department in each branch. The Computer Department will meet with each department that has devices connected to the computer network to make sure that department requirements are being taken into consideration in the design and operation of the network. Branches planning major upgrades or changes to the computer network should have these design proposals reviewed by headquarters.

77. An air-conditioned room should be designated where servers containing the branch data can be installed. The telephone system would usually also be installed in this room, along with all the communications equipment needed to connect the branch to the outside telephone system and to the Internet. Access to this room should be limited to those who have been authorized by the Computer Department overseer and the Branch Committee.

78. Training and Support: The Computer Department must be service-oriented. Its goal is not only to provide computer equipment and software but also to help branch members make good use of the equipment and software that have been approved and provided for translation, publishing, and administration.

79. The complexity of the technology in use today makes it very important that thorough training be provided for those working in the Computer Department. This includes understanding the office productivity software and server products currently being used. It is also necessary to train backup people. When a computer system is installed, training is often provided. Ongoing training is required to get the most benefit from the computer equipment and to reduce

the frustration that results from members not knowing how to use the equipment or software.

80. Depending on the size of the branch, the Computer Department might choose to establish a help desk that brothers can contact to receive help with using computer equipment and software. The brothers or sisters assigned to the help desk should be well-trained so that they can resolve the majority of problems without involving other technicians. In addition, those working on the help desk should be patient and kind with those needing assistance, showing a willing spirit. In most cases, it is good for those who support the hardware and software to deal directly with the brothers using the hardware and software. This promotes good understanding and cooperation and usually leads to better support. The help desk is not to provide assistance for or to repair personally owned computers.

81. Admin: The WHQ Computer Department is responsible for the development and support of the Admin software, the standard administrative software used by all branch offices worldwide. Unless approved to do otherwise, branch offices should use Admin or request enhancements rather than develop other administrative software locally. The Admin program is kept up-to-date with organizational procedures as these are adjusted from time to time. —See 3:87.

82. Admin is a large program with thousands of different features. Since it is used by both large and small branch offices, not all features are appropriate for each branch office. Simplification in branch operations also means simplifying our use of computers wherever possible. The Branch Committee in each branch is responsible for deciding which features of Admin should be used. Balance is required to ensure that the features of the software being used contribute to productivity and accuracy without

placing a burden of unnecessary work on those using it. If a Branch Committee is unsure about using a particular feature of the program, it should consult with the WHQ Computer Department.

83. Selected brothers in various branches serve on the Admin Regional Support Team. In this assignment, these brothers make sure to follow direction from the WHQ Computer Department when providing support to the branches. Therefore, branches should e-mail the WHQ Computer Department to request Admin support. The WHQ Computer Department may then assign a Regional Support Team member to assist. If a branch office needs assistance to install a major update or a new module for Admin, the requesting branch office should send a memorandum to the WHQ Computer Department, outlining the need.

84. The Branch Committee should organize **Admin support**. The branch Computer Department will maintain the Admin server and database, make regular backups, apply necessary updates, and administer user security. The Branch Committee is responsible for determining which users are granted various Admin permissions. However, it is not necessary for Admin administrators to be members of the Branch Committee, as this is a technical role.

85. User training is best done by the most experienced Admin users in the branch. In many branches, this will be experienced users within a department. In branches that do not have experienced users within a department, a department overseer may ask the branch Computer Department for such training. Those assigned to support Admin should be alert to new features as described in the Admin documentation and should make sure that new features are made available to software users after discussing these features with the Branch Committee and the respective department overseers.

86. The WHQ Computer Department provides the branch offices with resources to assist in giving support. In addition, the Admin support site on the Global Bethel Intranet contains helpful information, training material, and program updates. Branch offices can also e-mail the WHQ Computer Department for technical assistance or to report bugs in the program.

87. Programming: Computer software can be a valuable tool in getting our work done. However, simplification in our operations includes simplifying our software requirements where possible. Standard software packages are developed and maintained under the direction of headquarters, and as far as possible, branches should work with the standard software tools provided, such as Admin, jw.org, MEPS, and the Watchtower Translation System (WTS). This software should be kept up-to-date as directed by headquarters. —See 3:81.

88. It is generally not necessary for a branch to develop custom software, and most branches do not require a separate programming group in the Computer Department. All software projects must be approved by the Branch Committee and the WHQ Computer Department. When the Branch Committee recommends a local programming project, it should write to the WHQ Computer Department for approval. The WHQ Computer Department will consult with other headquarters departments and seek approval from the appropriate Governing Body committee as needed.

89. Where a local need is not addressed by a standard software package, such as Admin, jw.org, MEPS, or WTS, it is best in most cases to request an enhancement to the existing software. In this way, other branches with the same needs may benefit. Enhancement requests for existing software should be submitted in writing to the headquarters department or Governing Body committee

that cares for the software package. —See 8:1.

90. At times, because of some specific local situation, a department at the branch office might not be able to care for its assigned work exactly as desired using the Admin program. In such cases, the Branch Committee should usually adjust the way the department does its work. If it is believed necessary, the Branch Committee may send an enhancement request to the WHQ Computer Department. If it is not possible for a department to use the standard software because of local legal requirements or other unique circumstances, the Branch Committee should write to the WHQ Computer Department for direction.

91. All branch offices are approved to make a few specific customizations to the Admin program. Before making other customizations or local extensions, the Branch Committee should write to the WHQ Computer Department for approval and direction. Branches should not submit enhancement requests and then customize Admin to match what they requested while waiting for the enhancement to be programmed. All local customizations that are approved by the WHQ Computer Department must be documented carefully, since they must be reapplied when upgrades to the Admin program are sent from headquarters.

92. Admin enhancement requests should always be entered on the appropriate document template, approved by a Branch Committee member, and then sent to the WHQ Computer Department. If the benefit of an enhancement request justifies the amount of work required, it will be approved by the WHQ Computer Department. Enhancement requests that would involve significant work or would change an organizational procedure will be referred to the appropriate headquarters department or Governing Body committee for consideration.

93. Commercial Software: The Computer Department is responsible for making sure that commercial software is not used without proper licensing. Personally owned software should not be used on branch computers. If software is needed, it should be properly purchased and licensed by the branch. This means that records have to be kept to show clearly all available licenses at the branch and who is using them. Discrepancies must be resolved either by removing the program or by obtaining a proper license. No software should be installed on any branch equipment with-

out prior approval from the Computer Department.

94. Use of the Internet: The Internet should remain logically separate from the branch network in a manner that is in harmony with the latest direction from headquarters. Internet access should be monitored and filtered. Access to the Internet during working hours should be granted only to those who require it for their work. Periodically, reminders should be given about using this access for work-related matters only.

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CHART 3.1

CORRESPONDENCE FORMATS FOR COMMITTEES AND DEPARTMENTS AT WORLD HEADQUARTERS

Governing Body and Committees	Correspondence Format
Governing Body Coordinators' Committee Personnel Committee Publishing Committee Service Committee Teaching Committee Writing Committee	Numbered Letter
Headquarters Departments	
Art Department Audio/Video Services Broadcasting Department Global Health Care Group Global Purchasing Department Hospital Information Services International Printing Group MEPS Programming Office of Public Information Text Processing Services Theocratic Schools Department Translation Services Treasurer's Office Web Publishing WHQ Computer Department WHQ Legal Department WHQ Travel Department Worldwide Design/Construction Department Writing Archives Writing Correspondence Writing Department	Memorandum

CHAPTER 4

PERSONNEL COMMITTEE

REDACTED



REDACTED



REDACTED



REDACTED



REDACTED



REDACTED



REDACTED



REDACTED

necessary. Otherwise, the matter will be handled at Bethel. In either case, two elders will investigate the allegation. If the accused is under consideration for a theocratic assignment, it should be held in abeyance pending resolution of the case. If upon investigation the elders determine that the charges have no substance or that no further action is needed, they should inform the Branch Committee in writing of their findings. If the elders determine that a disfellowshipping offense has been committed, the Branch Committee will appoint a judicial committee.

36. Judicial Committees Involving Bethelites in the Congregation:

If it has been established that a Bethel family member has committed a disfellowshipping offense **involving his congregation**, the congregation body of elders should inquire of the branch office immediately as to how to proceed. **The branch office will determine whether the local body of elders should convene a judicial committee or whether the case should be handled by a judicial committee at Bethel.** If the local elders are directed to appoint the judicial committee, the case will be handled in an expeditious manner, just as a judicial case would be handled for any publisher in the local congregation. The judicial committee should immediately advise the branch office of the final decision.

37. Judicial Committees at Bethel:

These are appointed **to handle offenses that are the basis for disfellowshipping**, just as they would be handled in the congregation. The judicial committee and its chairman are appointed by the Branch Committee. Qualified elders who are in a good position to render a balanced and just decision should be appointed. Though the judicial committee is usually made up of three elders, it could include four or five because of the gravity of the offense and other factors. Branch Committee members should not serve on judicial committees if other qualified brothers are available to do so. Thus, if needed, some Branch Commit-

JUDICIAL COMMITTEES

34. Anyone coming to know of **serious misconduct** on the part of a member of the Bethel family should advise the offender of his obligation to bring this to the attention of a member of the Branch Committee or another elder. The one having knowledge of the offense should also make a report to the Branch Committee so that the organization will be kept clean. (Lev. 5:1) This should be done whether the offender reports the matter or not.

35. Investigation Procedure: If the elders of the congregation that a Bethel family member attends become aware of an accusation against the Bethelite, they should immediately contact the branch office for direction. If the accusation involves the Bethelite's conduct with someone in his congregation or if the offense was committed in his congregation environment, the Branch Committee may determine that it will be most practical to have the local elders investigate and handle the case to the extent

tee members would be available to serve on an appeal committee. Although the judicial committee may want to consult with members of the Branch Committee before reaching a conclusion, the judicial committee alone should make the decision. The report to the Branch Committee will be made out using the form *Judicial Committee Summary at Bethel* (A-7).

38. Appeal Committees: If the judicial committee (either at Bethel or in the congregation) decides that the Bethel family member should be disfellowshipped, he may make an appeal in writing to the Branch Committee. The Branch Committee will select an appeal committee of qualified elders at Bethel, one of whom will be appointed to serve as chairman. **The appeal should be heard in an expeditious manner even if the basis for the appeal does not appear to be sound.** In the case of disfellowshipping, the wrongdoer should be given the usual seven days to make this appeal, even though he would normally leave Bethel on the day the original judicial committee advises him of the decision to disfellowship. No announcement of the disfellowshipping should be made until seven days have elapsed since the appeal was handled.—*ks10* 8:1-20.

39. When the disfellowshipping is upheld, there is no further arrangement for appeal. However, **if an individual persists in believing a serious error in judgment has occurred**, the appeal committee should inform him that he may submit his allegations in writing to the appeal committee within seven days for transmittal to the Branch Committee. *The appeal committee should not mention this provision unless the individual indicates that he believes a serious error in judgment has occurred.* If he indicates a desire to submit a letter of appeal to the Branch Committee, the announcement of disfellowshipping should be delayed. The appeal committee should submit the wrongdoer's letter, the report from the judicial committee, and a re-

port from the appeal committee to the Branch Committee. No announcement should be made until a reply is received from the Branch Committee.—*ks10* 8:14-15.

40. If someone is judicially reprovved and therefore must leave Bethel, a letter should be sent to the body of elders of the congregation that he will attend so that the elders may be able to assist him to regain his spirituality. A copy of the judicial committee's report (either from Bethel or from the congregation) should be sent to the Service Department, which will write the letter to the body of elders. In the case of disfellowshipping, the form *Notification of Disfellowshipping or Disassociation* (S-77) should also be included in the report to the Service Department. If the person is reinstated, the S-77 form should be signed and returned to the Service Department. An announcement should be made to the Bethel family in the case of a disfellowshipping. (*ks10* 7:31) In the case of someone who is judicially reprovved, the Branch Committee should use good judgment in determining whether an announcement should be made or not.—*ks10* 7:21.

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CHAPTER 6

SERVICE COMMITTEE

FIELD MISSIONARIES

1. The Service Committee appoints field missionaries and determines the lands to which they will be assigned. Branches that wish to request additional field missionaries should submit the *Request for Field Missionaries* (S-218) form to the Service Committee by April and November of each year.—See 6:5-6.

2. Hour Requirement: The field missionary hour requirement is 130 hours a month. Sisters who are 40 years of age or older have a requirement of 120 hours a month. It is understood that a field missionary who serves as a congregation elder may at times be needed for additional short-term theocratic assignments. For example, he may need to serve on a special committee or a Disaster Relief Committee, help with circuit or convention organization, assist in the construction or renovation of his own Kingdom Hall, or serve as a substitute circuit overseer. In addition, he may be needed for a brief period of time to train local elders to care for their responsibilities on a Hospital Liaison Committee. In exceptional situations, the travel time to attend an assigned circuit assembly, regional convention, or Kingdom Ministry School may be unusually long. If such assignments prevent him from making his hour requirement, a brief explanation as well as the number of hours spent should be included on the monthly report submitted on jw.org or on his monthly S-212 report. An explanation should also be written in the "Remarks" column of the *Congregation's Publisher Record* (S-21) card. However, the hours spent should not be included in the "Hours" column. The branch will also mark the Admin records accordingly.

- If a missionary with less than 15 years of special full-time service

is consistently unable to meet his monthly hour requirement because of serious and debilitating health problems, perhaps for six months or so, then the Branch Committee should follow the direction outlined in 6:10. For those who are 50 years of age or older or who have 15 or more years in special full-time service, a **reduced hour requirement** may be appropriate. To determine a reasonable hour goal, the branch office should receive a recommendation from the missionary's body of elders and one from the circuit overseer before submitting the recommendation to the Service Committee. For reporting purposes, a field missionary with an approved reduced hour quota will continue with the FMF enrollment code. Periodically, the branch should review the field missionary's circumstances to determine whether the reduced hour quota is still needed or whether a further reduction should be recommended to the Service Committee. In most cases, a reduced hour requirement is better than no hour requirement at all. The recommendation that a field missionary have no hour requirement is usually reserved for field missionaries who have extremely limiting circumstances because of advanced age or life-threatening health issues and whose hour requirement has already been progressively reduced.

3. Marriage: If a single field missionary becomes engaged to be married, he or she should inform the branch office right away. If the field missionary indicates that he or she wishes to continue

in the missionary work along with his or her prospective mate, the branch should immediately request a confidential *Personal Qualifications Report* (S-326) from the missionary's body of elders and one from his or her circuit overseer.

- **If the prospective mate lives in the branch territory,** the branch may send him or her a *Questionnaire for Prospective Field Missionary* (S-214) to fill out. In addition, the prospective mate's body of elders and circuit overseer should be asked to complete separate *Personal Qualifications Reports* (S-326). The Branch Committee will review the missionary's qualifications and those of his or her prospective mate, taking into consideration the reputation and the physical health and stamina of each one. Whether favorable or otherwise, all the reports (translated into English) along with the Branch Committee's recommendation and the prospective mate's S-214 questionnaire should be submitted to the Service Committee, which will make the final decision.
- **If the prospective mate does not live in the branch territory,** the Branch Committee should submit the S-326 reports for the missionary to the Service Committee along with its recommendation based on the Branch Committee's knowledge of the missionary. In turn, the Service Committee will obtain the needed reports from the prospective mate's branch office. **In all cases, the Service Committee will make the final decision as to whether someone continues as a field missionary following his or her marriage.**

4. Pregnancy: A field missionary couple who learn that they are to be parents should inform the branch immediately. The couple should be given a period of three months to get settled, during which they will continue to receive their

monthly allowance. During this three-month period, the couple will need to locate suitable accommodations and find employment, so it is not expected that they will meet their monthly hour requirement. If one or both mates wish to become regular pioneers, they will have an additional three months to make the transition and their full-time service history would continue uninterrupted. If requested, the branch office is authorized to assist a departing missionary with the cost of return travel to his home country and the costs associated with shipping his basic personal belongings. For information on transitional financial assistance, see 6:130.

5. Missionary Assignments: Field missionaries are a valuable resource, and the Branch Committee must give careful consideration to where they will be assigned. Assignments should enable the missionaries to accomplish the most good in stabilizing and strengthening preaching and congregation activities in densely populated areas. Missionaries should not be assigned to areas where their health and safety will be endangered. The Branch Committee should thoroughly consider such factors as the publisher-to-population ratio, the language fields that need to be targeted, and the availability of suitable housing. Specific congregation assignments for field missionaries are made by the Branch Committee. Missionaries do not select their own congregation assignments. Before any reassignment of field missionaries is finalized, a branch representative, preferably a member of the Branch Committee, should discuss the proposal with the missionaries involved to address any questions or concerns. There is no need to consult with the Service Committee about such reassignments unless the field missionaries raise a concern about the proposed move. (Prov. 13:10; 15:22) The Service Committee should be consulted when submitting requests to transfer a field missionary to Bethel for more than three months.—See 4:7.

6. Housing for Field Missionaries:

Generally, branches should endeavor to house a field missionary couple or two single brothers by themselves in a modest apartment or house. Branch Committees will follow the guidelines and options below:

- Field missionaries should be assigned to **densely populated areas** where their efforts may have a profound impact in stabilizing and strengthening preaching and congregation activities. After the Branch Committee has identified an area where field missionaries can be used effectively, a qualified brother should be assigned to research available housing options and the costs involved. This could include identifying Kingdom Hall apartments or apartments that local brothers are renting out. The Branch Committee should guide those who are assigned to research the matter so that the needs of foreign missionaries, such as safety, the distance to the territory, and the availability of public transportation, are kept in mind. Have in mind that some locations may be a little more costly but would allow the field missionaries to be more centrally located in their assigned territory. **The Branch Committee, not the field missionaries, will make the final decision as to which accommodations should be rented.**
- Consider the **health and safety** of the field missionaries. Are there apartments or small dwellings suitable for a couple and available in a reasonably safe location? A larger apartment or home to house more than one couple would be recommended only when safety and/or health issues require it or when providing separate housing is considerably more costly. For example, an older single or widowed missionary sister may not need to be assisted by local publishers as outlined in 6:11. How-

ever, for her safety and peace of mind, it may be advisable for her to share accommodations with a younger missionary couple. Additionally, in some lands it would be very expensive to set up smaller missionary homes in areas where electricity, water, and other basic utilities are not available. Therefore, the Branch Committee should exercise good judgment when considering these factors.

- The Branch Committee is authorized to spend up to USD 1,000 per month per couple for missionary accommodations. Please note that this approval limit includes the monthly cost of utilities. **In most lands, a suitable apartment and utilities for two people would cost USD 200 to 500 per month.** Higher expenditures would be viewed as quite exceptional and possibly extravagant in developing lands. This approval level on rental agreements has been established on the premise that the Branch Committee will be careful to ensure that field missionaries are located where they can accomplish the most good and where the cost of accommodations and utilities will not be prohibitive. If you need further direction on this matter, please write to the Publishing Committee. The branch office should care for the payment of rent and utilities and help the field missionaries handle any legal agreements that may be needed to secure accommodations. If local circumstances require paying the owner several months of rent up front, this may be done up to a maximum of one year's rental. Rental agreements that exceed USD 1,000 per month or USD 12,000 per year or recommendations that involve the construction of new missionary homes should be sent to the Publishing Committee. If it is concluded that a branch-owned missionary home should

be used for some other purpose or sold, the recommendation should be sent to the Publishing Committee.—See 5:192.

- In cases where it might be less expensive for the individual renter to pay the rent instead of the organization, the branch office may provide the missionary with the funds to cover the rent. As long as the monthly rent and utilities for field missionaries is less than USD 1,000 per month for two people, there is no need to show this on the *Record of Allowances* (A-29) form.—See 5:192.

7. Home Equipment Needs: Branch Committees must be **practical, kind, and generous** in the supplying of suitable home equipment for the field missionaries. A standard approach will not work in all countries. Some field missionaries may have personal linens, furniture, and equipment that they want to use in their assignment. Newer missionaries may have very little and may need more assistance in obtaining these items. A rented apartment in one location may have heating, air conditioning, appliances, and access to laundry facilities. In other locations, the apartment may lack these provisions, and field missionaries will need to be provided with these basic necessities. The local situation and circumstances must be carefully considered. The branch office should **avoid installing expensive equipment**, such as water-filtration devices and backup electrical systems, **in rented missionary homes**. For rented accommodations, it is preferred that any additional equipment that the branch office obtains be limited to what is practical and what could be moved easily to another rented home. For example, while the branch office should not install expensive generators in a rented missionary home, a less-expensive portable generator that provides backup power for the refrigerator and air-conditioning may be obtained if needed. The same principle applies to other equipment, such as water filters. If there is a legitimate need for some-

thing beyond that, then please write to the Publishing Committee. If the Branch Committee feels that it is reasonable to provide **Internet service for a missionary home** and the missionaries agree to cover the monthly costs, it may submit the recommendation with the details to the Publishing Committee for consideration, explaining the cost of installation and the monthly cost per person.

8. Shepherdling Visits: The Branch Committee assigns members of the committee to make annual shepherding visits on field missionaries. Such visits are not made on circuit overseers in foreign service nor on field instructors in foreign service. If it is practical, the visit could be arranged in conjunction with another assignment, such as a circuit assembly or a Kingdom Hall dedication, perhaps using Friday or Monday to meet with the missionaries. Apart from travel time, usually no more than a day or two should be needed to meet with all of the field missionaries in a particular city. After his meeting with the field missionaries as a group, the branch representative may spend any remaining time with the missionaries on an individual basis. The branch representative should make it his goal to provide each missionary couple or single missionary with specific, warm commendation. (Prov. 12: 25; 1 Thess. 5:11) Following the visit, the branch representative will provide the Branch Committee with a completed *Personal Qualifications Report* (S-326) on each field missionary. If problems or concerns arise, the branch representative should not try to handle these on his own. Rather, he should report his observations to the Branch Committee, which will follow up as needed. If the branch representative is married, his wife may be given time off from her Bethel assignment to accompany him. While her husband is making the shepherding visits, she could spend time in the ministry, perhaps with other missionaries or with some of the local publishers.

- While it is strongly preferred that Branch and Country committee

members make such annual visits, other mature and exceptionally kind elders working in the Service Department may be assigned to assist the committee members. This exception is made primarily for lands where there are a large number of field missionaries or where some members of the committee cannot care for this assignment because of age or health.

9. Travel Expenses: If a field missionary needs some assistance to cover his actual round-trip travel expenses to attend his assigned circuit assembly, regional convention, or Kingdom Ministry School, the Branch Committee may reimburse actual travel expenses upon request. This provision is not to be advertised and is intended only to cover unusually high travel expenses that may be involved to reach the assigned assembly or school.

10. Recommending the Deletion of a Field Missionary: Occasionally, a Branch Committee finds it necessary to recommend the deletion of a field missionary, perhaps because of prolonged problems in getting along with others or chronic health issues that prevent him from fulfilling the requirements for field missionaries. Before sending the recommendation to the Service Committee, the Branch Committee should arrange for a meeting with the field missionary to explain the reasons for recommending his deletion. If the missionary disagrees and wishes to provide his comments to the Service Committee, he may submit a letter that should be forwarded with the Branch Committee's recommendation. If he agrees with the recommendation, this should be indicated in the Branch Committee's letter. The Service Committee will consider the matter and provide further direction. If requested, the branch office is authorized to assist a departing missionary with the cost of return travel to his home country and the costs associated with shipping his basic personal belongings.

11. Long-Term Care of Field Missionaries: At times, field missionaries who have served faithfully in their foreign assignment for decades begin to experience chronic health problems or the limitations of old age or disease. The organization is pleased to care for their needs. (Ps. 71:9) While there is no arrangement to provide housing and long-term care for field missionaries at Bethel, the Branch Committee will take the lead in thoroughly investigating other options with the objective of providing the field missionary with personal and/or medical care while the field missionary *remains in a field assignment*. For example, could the local congregation provide needed assistance? (Mark 10:28-30) Are qualified local publishers or pioneers with medical training and experience available to assist? (1 Thess. 5:14) In some cases, consideration could be given to hiring a publisher or a pioneer to care for the long-term needs of the brother or sister. If a pioneer is involved, the branch may direct the congregation elders to show the pioneer consideration regarding his annual hour requirement. Simply put, the Branch Committee should consider what can be done locally, in the foreign assignment, to meet the long-term needs of the elderly field missionary in the best way possible.—See 6:6; Eccl. 5:18.

12. In some cases, a longtime field missionary may request to live closer to fleshly or to spiritual family members who are eager to care for his physical or medical needs; this is appropriate and appreciated. (1 Tim. 5:3, 4) However, what if long-term specialized health care cannot be provided in the foreign assignment and the field missionary has no family members available to assist him? In such cases, thorough consideration will be given by the Service Committee to transferring the field missionary to another country, such as his home country, where health care can be provided while he serves in the field. As noted above, it may be possible to utilize the services of qualified brothers and sisters in the field who can provide the personal assistance

that is needed. In an exceptional case that seems to necessitate transferring a field missionary to Bethel for long-term health care, the Governing Body will need to be consulted.

HOSPITAL INFORMATION SERVICES

13. Under the supervision of the Service Committee, Hospital Information Services (HIS), a world headquarters department, provides direction and practical assistance to branch Hospital Information Desks (HIDs) and Hospital Liaison Committees (HLCs). This arrangement (1) supports the Bible-based position to 'abstain . . . from blood' and (2) helps to correct misconceptions about the position of Jehovah's Witnesses on medical care.—Acts 15:29.

14. HIS provides periodic training for the branch HID and the HLCs. HIS maintains a database of current medical articles on transfusion-alternative treatment strategies from respected medical journals. HIS also supplies HIDs with useful medical publications, medical article citations lists, video programs on transfusion alternatives, and favorable court decisions involving patients' rights. Therefore, branch HIDs should not do extensive searches for medical information or begin working on any other materials related to HID or HLC activity without permission from the Service Committee. When emergency cases or other urgent situations arise requiring such information, HIS should be contacted immediately by e-mail or by telephone, following up with official correspondence, which would normally include the *Medical Emergency Worksheet* (hlc-7-E). HIS will provide any needed materials. To accommodate urgent requests for information on medical alternatives to transfusion, HIS maintains 24-7 telephone accessibility. A branch HID should also be accessible to HLCs and hospital professionals in its branch territory on a 24-7 basis.

15. If a branch HID becomes aware of a high-quality, peer-reviewed, local-language medical article and the Branch Committee believes that the article would be useful, such an article, along with a brief English summary, may be sent to HIS for approval. Articles should focus on one or more of the following: (1) drugs, devices, or techniques that reduce or eliminate the use of (donor) blood transfusion; (2) ethical/legal concerns, patients' rights, or informed consent issues; (3) transfusion hazards; (4) the cost-effectiveness of transfusion alternative strategies; or (5) an outline of how to perform a specific medical or surgical procedure without the use of donor blood.

16. Hospital Information Desk (HID): An HID is established at each branch to oversee the HLCs within its assigned territory. The Branch Committee directs the work of the HID. The department name Hospital Information Desk is to be used when communicating with the HLCs and other departments within the branch office and when writing to other branches and to headquarters. However, when the HID communicates with doctors and secular professionals, its letterhead and business cards should describe the department as "Hospital Information Services (Country) for Jehovah's Witnesses." An HID should also use this designation when it uses exhibit booths at medical conferences. While there is no arrangement for HID representatives to visit HLCs, the Branch Committee may grant approval on a case-by-case basis for an HID representative to visit an HLC that is in urgent need of training or that is finding it difficult to assist the brothers to obtain medical care without blood transfusions. The support and medical information provided by HIS is primarily in English. Therefore, if possible, the HID overseer or his assistant should be reasonably proficient in spoken and written English, in addition to the local language.—See the Service Committee's

letter to all branches dated HSA:HIA February 13, 2014, No. C-26033S.

17. The HID maintains a list of consulting doctors who are respected, highly skilled, well-known advocates of non-blood management and who are willing and able to explain effectively to less experienced doctors the use of transfusion alternatives. When emergencies or complicated cases arise, the HID may provide an HLC with the name of a consulting doctor. If there are no consulting doctors available in the country, the HID may contact HIS or a nearby branch HID for assistance. **Each HLC maintains a list of cooperative doctors** in its local area who have agreed to care for Witness patients. (In smaller branches with few cooperative doctors, the HID may decide to keep on file the HLC lists of cooperative doctors.) Thus, when Witnesses seek a cooperative specialist or medical facility, the HLCs can supply the names of several doctors or medical facilities that can provide the needed specialized care. (HLCs may provide indirect humanitarian assistance through Witness relatives or local elders to dis-fellowshipped individuals.) HLCs refrain from endorsing doctors, medical procedures, medical facilities, pharmaceuticals or herbal products, and alternative therapies. In all matters of health care, members of the HLCs avoid imposing their conscience on others. For cooperative physicians and facilities outside their assigned area, HLCs may consult with neighboring HLCs or with the branch HID. Only the HID should consult a nearby branch or HIS as needed. —See the Service Committee's letter to all branches dated GAO:HIA October 2, 2006.

18. Hospital Liaison Committees (HLCs): The Branch Committee determines the number of HLCs needed in its branch territory. When an HLC needs additional brothers to help care for the workload, the HLC determines who should be recommended. Qualifications for HLC members are outlined in *Circuit Overseer Guidelines* (tg). The HLC should

consult the circuit overseer to ensure that the recommended brother is qualified to serve in this capacity. The HLC then sends the recommendation to the HID, using the *Hospital Liaison Committee Recommendation* (hlc-21) form. If in agreement, the HID forwards the recommendation to the branch Service Department for comments. If there is no objection to the appointment, two members of the Branch Committee may approve it.

19. HLCs are set up in most major cities to (1) act as a liaison between health-care providers and Witness patients and their families when requested; (2) assist Witness patients in locating doctors willing to provide treatment without blood transfusion; (3) provide medical articles to doctors, in accordance with copyright laws; (4) arrange consultations between local doctors and experienced specialists; (5) assist Witness patients in transferring to another medical facility if this becomes necessary; (6) make presentations to medical staffs, health ministries, social welfare officials, legal personnel, and others about our position on medical care and/or blood transfusions; and (7) appoint elders to serve as Patient Visitation Group (PVG) members. HLCs coordinate the activity of the PVGs and meet with the members at least once a year to review needs, offer encouragement, and keep these elders abreast of HLC activity. During a local blood-related medical crisis, the branch may designate HLC members to respond to media inquiries. The Branch Committee would likely direct the HID and the HLC members to work closely with the branch Legal Department and the Public Information Desk on such media matters. (See 3:44, 52-53, 56-61.) Annually, toward the beginning of the year, bodies of elders receive a letter from the branch with an updated list of members of the local HLC, unless the elders have access to regular updates on jw.org.

20. Patient Visitation Groups (PVGs): HLCs organize PVGs in key cities to provide spiritual support for hospitalized Witness patients from

outside the local area. HLCs may consult with the circuit overseers for recommendations of elders to serve as PVG members. An HLC member is assigned to oversee PVG activity, especially in metropolitan areas. At least once a year, HLCs meet with the PVGs to review needs and offer encouragement. During hospital visits, the PVG elders endeavor to provide emotional and spiritual support and, at appropriate times, pray with Witness patients and relatives. When a PVG finds a patient from a local congregation who needs assistance and support, it facilitates contact with the elders in the patient's congregation. PVG activities do not replace the responsibility of the local congregations to visit and care for the needs of their publishers who are in the hospital.

21. Bloodless Medicine and Surgery Programs (BMSPs): Hospitals in some lands have established BMSPs, blood conservation programs, and patient blood management programs. This means that the hospital administration, the coordinator(s) within the hospital, and/or various specialists have made a commitment to provide medical or surgical care without donor blood transfusions to patients who request such care. At times, business organizations make contracts with hospitals to develop and maintain BMSPs. Even when staffed by Witnesses, such organizations are not spokesmen for Jehovah's Witnesses.

22. HLCs should not endorse or participate in the meetings of BMSPs or share with them the HLCs' confidential lists of cooperative doctors. The activity of these entities must remain separate from HIDs, HLCs, and the congregations. (See *km* 9/87 p. 4 and 6/77 p. 4.) The branch should write to the Service Committee if there are some unusual circumstances warranting a different approach.

23. Medical Conferences: The Branch Committee should be very selective as to the type of conferences and the number of conferences it approves

for the HID to attend each year, so that Bethel members are not away from their regular assignments too frequently. Only conferences directly related to the blood issue should be considered. However, conferences featuring blood conservation or transfusion-alternative strategies will often discuss Jehovah's Witnesses and having an HID or HLC representative present may help to correct any misinformation. If a conference is held in another country, the Branch Committee should seek in writing the approval of the Service Committee to have a representative attend.

24. If the HID or an HLC is invited to present information on the position of Jehovah's Witnesses on medical matters and the Branch Committee agrees, a copy of the proposed presentation should be sent to the Service Committee for approval. This is not necessary if the brother uses the standard HID/HLC *PowerPoint* presentation.

25. The branch should not sponsor a medical conference or symposium. If cooperative doctors consent to their names being given to the sponsors as potential presenters, this may be done. If the Branch Committee believes that more involvement is warranted, the Service Committee should be consulted. There is no objection to HLC members verbally informing cooperative doctors of such events if the HLC believes that the doctors may wish to attend. However, HLCs should not initiate a special campaign to invite doctors in their area to the event and should refrain from advertising or giving the impression that they endorse or promote an event, even when Witnesses are organizers. Furthermore, the branch should not incur transportation, registration, or lodging expenses for physicians to attend these events. If further consideration is warranted, the Branch Committee should write to the Service Committee.

26. Exhibit/Display Booths: The branch should be very selective regarding the type and the number of medi-

cal conferences for which it will seek approval to set up a booth. Only conferences attended by doctors who regularly deal with the blood issue are to be considered. Before contracting with the sponsors to exhibit, the branch office should seek approval from the Service Committee, submitting the name of the conference, its location, expected attendance, total costs, and other relevant information concerning the event. Only the approved booth graphics and signage should be used. The Service Committee should approve any modifications. When a booth is requested from a custodial branch, sufficient lead time should be allowed (at least three months). Only the approved presentation kits should be used as handouts. Branches may write to HIS for suggestions on what to include in the information packages for doctors.—See the letters to all branches dated HIM:HIO August 23, 1999, and HIM:HIP December 22, 2000.

27. Medical Devices and Supplies: Hospitals in developing countries may ask the branch to donate medical devices, equipment, or other supplies. Before making any commitment, the Branch Committee should write to the Service Committee for direction.

- **Pharmaceuticals:** In developing lands with limited access to basic pharmaceuticals, a branch may wish to store a small supply of specialized medicine (such as EPO or iron) and/or other basic medical supplies. However, before requesting permission from the Service Committee, the branch should check with regulatory health agencies in the country to determine the legal requirements that regulate storing these items. If the Service Committee approves the request, the branch should be judicious in the amount of medicine kept on hand, perhaps storing only a six-month supply or enough for two or three patients. The branch should sub-

mit a *Nonliterature Branch Request* to replace any items used. Brothers may express their appreciation for this arrangement by donating financially to defray the cost of replenishing the stock of medicine and supplies, though such a donation is not a requirement to benefit from this arrangement.

28. Web Sites: Neither the branches nor the HLCs should place information about HID/HLC activity on any public Web site unless the Service Committee grants approval.

OUR KINGDOM MINISTRY

29. Branch Committees are authorized to make necessary adjustments to the local edition(s) of *Our Kingdom Ministry* or to outline adjustments in a letter to the affected congregations. However, rather than preparing new material for *Our Kingdom Ministry* to address a local problem, the branch office should **try to use material that has already been published**. In some cases, it may be best for the branch to send a letter to the bodies of elders explaining the concern that needs attention and instructing the elders to make local application of certain published references during a local needs part on the Service Meeting.

30. If there are unique situations that cannot be addressed as described above, the Branch Committee may submit a draft *Our Kingdom Ministry* article to the Service Committee for consideration. This would need to be done **several months in advance of scheduled printing**. What is written about should deal primarily with the field ministry and other activity pertaining to the preaching and teaching work. Generally, it is not wise to prepare new material featuring Scriptural direction on topics such as local marriage or funeral customs or superstitious practices common in the branch territory. If the Branch Committee feels that there are unique circumstances that need to be addressed during the Service Meeting, it is best to write to

the Service Committee for direction before preparing new material.

31. Foreign-Language Editions: It is recommended that branches use the foreign-language edition of *Our Kingdom Ministry* prepared by the translating branch. This reduces the amount of work for translation teams and makes for a unified approach for presenting the good news to certain language groups. Rather than adjusting *Our Kingdom Ministry*, the branch office may send a letter to congregations and groups with any needed direction that applies to their territory when a specific need arises for a particular foreign-language field. In an exceptional case, an article prepared by the branch office for the local foreign-language edition may be sent to the Service Committee for review and approval, in harmony with the guidelines outlined above.

32. Literature Offers: Literature offers are established to meet the needs of the territory, with the objective of helping many more people learn about the good news of the Kingdom. (1 Cor. 9:26; 14:9) All Branch and Country committees should carefully review the offers set forth by the Service Committee in the Governing Body's annual letter and determine which items will best suit local needs. Branch Committees are authorized to make needed adjustments and announce these adjustments in the local edition(s) of *Our Kingdom Ministry* or, if necessary, in correspondence to the affected congregations. If a suggested presentation in the base edition of *Our Kingdom Ministry* does not fit local circumstances, the branch office should replace it with a more fitting one.

33. Field Service Highlights: The Branch Committee may decide what notable field service highlights will appear in the local edition of *Our Kingdom Ministry*. This may include new peaks reached in the number of publishers or pioneers, the total number of Bible studies conducted, the number of new ones bap-

tized, or the fine results achieved during a special campaign. The objective of such highlights is to encourage all members of the congregation, including those whose field service activity appears to be small. (Mark 14:8, 9; Luke 21:1-4) The highlights should not report on averages, such as hours, placements, return visits, or Bible studies. If many lands are served by a particular edition of *Our Kingdom Ministry*, the Branch Committee(s) will likely find it advantageous to alternate country reports month by month.—See 5:84.

SERVICE DEPARTMENT

34. Under the direction of the Branch Committee, the Service Department cares for matters related to the preaching work and the activity of congregations, elders and ministerial servants, circuit overseers, and pioneers. It also arranges assemblies and conventions and various theocratic schools. Brothers in the Service Department prepare responses to reports and inquiries from the field that relate to the preaching work and congregation activities. The Service Department works closely with the Local Design/Construction Department to determine where Kingdom Halls and Assembly Halls are needed and their priority. The Governing Body provides direction on such matters through the latest publications on congregation organization, various guidelines, and letters. If there is no clear policy on a matter, the Service Department should forward its questions to the Branch Committee. The Branch Committee may need to consult with the Service Committee or another Governing Body committee for direction.

Department Organization

35. Overseer: A member of the Branch or Country committee will be appointed to serve as the Service Department overseer. (See 2:13.) In most branches, an assistant overseer should be appointed to care for the workload, especially when the overseer is away

from the office. In larger branches, two brothers may be appointed by the Branch Committee to serve as assistant overseers.—See 2:15.

36. Deskmen: In a small branch office, the overseer may be able to handle the work of a Service Department deskman. In most branches, however, the Branch Committee will appoint other qualified elders to serve in the Service Department as deskmen who will care for the reports and correspondence from a number of circuits. The number of circuits assigned to a deskman varies according to the brother's workload, capabilities, health, and age limitations.

37. A deskman should be an experienced elder known for his loyal adherence to theocratic direction. He must be courteous, loyal, and courageous in giving sound Scriptural direction. He must be well-organized and diligent in caring for his responsibilities. He may have gained experience as a Service Desk secretary for several years. Experience has shown that there are benefits for some of the deskmen to have served in the traveling work prior to Bethel. Deskmen should give thorough training to the secretaries in the department with the objective of helping them to take on greater responsibility in the future. (2 Tim. 2:2) In most cases, such a training program would make it unnecessary routinely to transfer circuit overseers to Bethel to serve in the Service Department. However, if there is a need to transfer a circuit overseer to Bethel to serve as a Service Department deskman, the request, along with a complete explanation, should be submitted to the Service Committee. If the Service Committee agrees to release the circuit overseer for Bethel service, the recommendation will then be sent to the Personnel Committee. (See 4:7) When considering this option, the Branch Committee should keep in mind that not all circuit overseers and their wives will be able to adapt to Bethel life.

38. A deskman should be careful to avoid giving his own opinion on service-related matters. His counsel must be sound, based on the Bible and theocratic guidelines. (1 Cor. 4:6) To ensure that proper theocratic direction is relayed to the field, a **proofreading system** should be established. One deskman may proofread the work of another.

39. Service Desk Secretaries: As the workload increases, a brother may be assigned as a secretary to a deskman. Although he may be younger in years and may not have the same level of experience, a secretary must have the spiritual qualities required of a deskman. While it is preferred that a Service Desk secretary be an appointed elder, he would generally not need to be an older brother with many years of Bethel service or field experience. A modest young brother with fine spirituality and the potential to qualify in time to serve as a deskman may be used. His duties would include opening and sorting mail, attaching relevant background material, typing letters, filing, entering information into the computer, and so forth.

40. Desk Groups: As the number of deskmen increases, it may be practical to arrange them in groups of five or six and have them circulate difficult cases. The more-difficult cases can be considered at a weekly meeting. (Prov. 13:10) At the discretion of the Branch Committee, the more experienced Service Desk secretaries could be included in the group meetings in order to further their training. If those in the Service Department cannot resolve a complex issue by using published direction or if a case is of major importance, they will refer the matter to the Branch Committee. The Branch Committee, in turn, may need to consult with the Service Committee for direction.—See 2:21; 6:55.

Handling Telephone Calls and Correspondence

41. Telephone Calls: A telephone call should *always* be answered in a kind

and loving way. Even though the brother taking the call is busy and it may interrupt his work, reflecting warmth, respect, and concern for the brothers and others is important. One should be as helpful as possible to the individual calling. If the caller is from outside of Bethel, it is not wise for a deskman or his secretary to give his name unless the caller is a circuit overseer. However, there is no objection to providing an outside caller with the desk symbol of the deskman.

42. A telephone memorandum should be made for all telephone calls that deal with important matters and for calls in which direction is given and a record is necessary. The memorandum should include the name of the caller, the caller's telephone number, the congregation, the nature of the call, who took the call, and any direction that was given. This can be filed in the General Correspondence section of the congregation's file or in the HOLD file if a letter is forthcoming. If the caller presents a weighty matter, he should be requested to write to the branch office.

43. Incoming Mail: In smaller branches, the Service Department overseer may be able to handle routine mail. In most branches, it may be necessary to have a mail desk or a correspondence clerk assigned to open postal mail. A similar arrangement may be needed to process and route incoming electronic correspondence. Incoming mail is handled in the date order of receipt and according to its urgency. If at all possible, those working in the Service Department should make it their goal to reply to correspondence within two weeks.

44. Requests for Kingdom Hall Addresses and Meeting Times: In most cases, the branch office may provide any inquirer with basic information about Kingdom Hall addresses and meeting times. There is no objection to replying by e-mail to written requests for such basic information.—See 3:14; 6:48.

45. Correspondence From Other Branches: When another branch writes

to an individual in the branch territory, the letter will usually be sent to the Service Department for forwarding to the addressee. In most cases, such letters can be sent directly to the addressee. If there are any concerns about the information being provided or about the addressee, it would be best to send the letter through the congregation, with appropriate direction to the elders.

46. If the letter to the individual is accompanied by a courtesy copy for the branch, the original should be sent to the addressee, as directed above, and the courtesy copy filed in the BRANCH CORRESPONDENCE FILE. If the letter to the individual is *not* accompanied by a courtesy copy to the branch, this means that it was received electronically and printed in the office. The letter may be mailed as outlined above. A photocopy does not need to be made for the BRANCH CORRESPONDENCE FILE, as the electronic file copy will be retained according to the retention policy.

47. Letters sent to those living outside the branch territory are usually not mailed directly to the individual. Rather, after the letter is approved, it is sent to the overseeing branch office to be forwarded to the person or his congregation body of elders. (See 6:44-46.) Exceptions to this general policy are outlined in 6:48-49.

48. Inquiries From Publishers in Other Countries: It is important that all those who consider moving to a foreign land prayerfully count the cost and seek Jehovah's direction. (Luke 14:28; Jas. 1:5; *od* p. 111; *km* 8/11, pp. 4-6) The branch office should be helpful and respond promptly to any publisher who inquires about serving temporarily or permanently where the need is greater. If a written inquiry is accompanied by a favorable letter of recommendation from the Congregation Service Committee, the Service Department may provide such information as Kingdom Hall addresses, meeting times, and contact in-

formation of the coordinator(s) of the body of elders. The Service Department should be sure that any areas being recommended for assistance are safe for foreigners. The reply letter may be sent directly to the publisher via e-mail or surface mail. If the branch office is uncertain about the qualifications of a particular publisher, the letter should be sent to the inquirer's branch office, indicating that the letter should be forwarded to the individual or to his body of elders.—See 6:44.

49. While branches are authorized to provide general information to publishers about the country and congregations needing assistance, the branch is not authorized to provide extensive additional assistance, such as issuing sponsorship or guarantee letters; supplying residency, visa, or other legal forms; locating pioneer partners; and arranging suitable accommodations. These are personal matters that require careful investigation by the publisher before he or she moves to another country. Therefore, it is the responsibility of the individual publisher, not the branch office, to obtain information about visa requirements and work permits.—Gal. 6:5.

50. Certificates or Letters for Jehovah's Witnesses: On occasion, publishers and others associated with a local congregation may request that the body of elders or the branch office provide them with a signed letter or certificate that confirms or explains in some way the person's relationship with the Christian congregation. For example, local authorities in some areas may require that an elder who performs weddings or one who conducts meetings in prisons register and provide some proof of his ordination as a minister. A publisher or pioneer who is moving to serve where the need is greater in another country may request that the body of elders or the branch office provide him with a letter confirming that he is one of Jehovah's Witnesses in good standing. The immigration authorities in some countries may ask a person who is regularly

attending congregation meetings to provide a signed statement from the body of elders confirming that fact. In some lands, baptized Christians are called upon to explain to the authorities their personal and conscientious objection to military service. In neutrality cases, it may be helpful for the authorities to receive a letter or a certificate from the congregation or the branch office confirming that the conscientious objector is an ordained and baptized minister of Jehovah's Witnesses or a full-time preacher of the good news. **The Branch Committee is responsible for carefully determining (1) if the elders or the branch office should be involved in replying to such requests; (2) if so, the approved wording to be used; and (3) for whom such letters and certificates may be provided.** In most cases, the elders or the branch would issue such documents only for publishers in good standing. Any such letters or certificates approved by the Branch Committee should be limited to explaining the facts and not go into detail about a brother's or a sister's personal convictions. (1 Pet. 3:15) Furthermore, any document provided by the branch office on the letterhead of one of the organization's local legal entities should not in any way imply that the organization is sponsoring the person financially or legally. (Gal. 6:5) Publishers and pioneers who move on their own to another land should not be represented to immigration authorities as "missionaries" because they are not sponsored by the organization as is done for those who are in the Worldwide Order of Special Full-Time Servants of Jehovah's Witnesses. If the Branch Committee needs further guidance on such matters involving publishers, pioneers, or others in the field, it should write to the Service Committee. Matters related to the support of members of the Worldwide Order are further described in 3:34-38.

51. Circuit Overseer's Report on a Congregation: The *Report on Circuit Overseer's Visit With Congregation* (S-303) is used by the circuit overseer to give

the Service Department a brief report on the spirit of the congregation and any encouragement or counsel given. It is necessary to acknowledge the circuit overseer's report only if further correspondence would be helpful.

52. Appointments of Elders and Ministerial Servants:

Circuit overseers are appointed by the Governing Body to care for the appointments and deletions of elders and ministerial servants. (Acts 14:23; Titus 1:5) The procedures are outlined below and in *Circuit Overseer Guidelines* (tg).—See 6:67.

- **Preliminary check before circuit overseer's visit:** At least one month prior to the circuit overseer's regular visit to a congregation, the Congregation Service Committee will send to the Service Department and the circuit overseer the full name, date of birth, and date of baptism of each brother the body of elders will be recommending for appointment as an elder or a ministerial servant. Congregations with Internet access can provide this information by means of the *Recommendation for Elder/Ministerial Servant* (S-62) form using the Inbox feature on jw.org. Branches where Internet access is limited may allow congregations to submit the information by means of a phone call or text message. Once a check has been performed, the Service Department will inform the circuit overseer whether there are any legal reasons a brother should not be considered.
- **During the circuit overseer's visit:** During his meeting with the elders, the circuit overseer will discuss the Scriptural qualifications of each brother recommended. (ks10 3:1-10) The circuit overseer should take adequate time to ensure that the consideration is thorough and complete, asking pertinent questions during his meeting with the body of elders until he is

convinced that the recommended brother qualifies for appointment. If the circuit overseer determines that the brother does not measure up to the Scriptural requirements to a reasonable degree, he will advise the elders accordingly and inform them how they can help the brother to qualify in the future. At any time, the circuit overseer should feel free to consult with the Service Department or another experienced circuit overseer.

Only when a brother is (1) being appointed for the first time as a ministerial servant or (2) being reappointed as an elder or a ministerial servant for reasons other than his move from one congregation to another is it necessary for him to be asked the following questions: "Is there anything from your past, even before baptism, or in your personal or family life that disqualifies you or that would prevent you from accepting this appointment? Is there any reason why your appointment should not be announced to the congregation? Have you ever been involved at any time in the past with child sexual molestation?" In the situations mentioned above, the circuit overseer along with another elder will meet with the brother sometime following the circuit overseer's meeting with the elders but before the end of the visit to ask these questions. If the brother answers "No" to the questions, the circuit overseer will provide the elders with a signed appointment letter that includes the names of all those appointed during his visit. The circuit overseer will inform the Service Department of the appointments using the *Notification of Appointment or Deletion* (S-2). The appointments made during the visit will be announced to the congregation at the next Service Meeting. In all cases, a brother who has been appointed (or re-

appointed) as an elder or a ministerial servant should be informed of his appointment before it is announced to the congregation.

If the brother approved for appointment is not present at the conclusion of the visit and thus the necessary questions cannot be asked, the circuit overseer will not include the brother's name in the appointment letter left with the elders at the end of his visit. Rather, when the brother returns, two local elders will ask the brother the questions mentioned above. The coordinator of the body of elders will then inform the circuit overseer of the brother's answers to those questions. If the brother answers "No" to the questions, the circuit overseer will provide the elders with a signed appointment letter. The circuit overseer will inform the Service Department of the appointments using the S-2 form. At the Service Meeting following the receipt of the appointment letter, the brother's appointment will be announced to the congregation.

In the event that a substitute circuit overseer is serving the congregation, he should forward his recommendation(s) and those of the body of elders to the regular circuit overseer for consideration. Such recommendations will be handled as are other recommendations for appointment or deletion between visits. If the regular circuit overseer will be away from the circuit for (1) less than a month, he may hold the recommendations in abeyance until he returns; (2) one to three months, the branch office should designate another circuit overseer (perhaps a neighboring circuit overseer or one who recently served the circuit) to consider any recommendations received from substitutes; or (3) more than three months, the branch office should assign another

circuit overseer to visit congregations in the circuit. If the regular circuit overseer is unable to communicate with the affected congregations and substitutes before leaving his assignment, the branch office should take the lead in informing them.

- *Appointments between regular visits to a congregation:* When a brother moves into the congregation with a favorable letter of recommendation for reappointment and the next visit of the circuit overseer is not in the near future, the Congregation Service Committee of the new congregation may send the S-62 form to the circuit overseer, informing him that the body of elders recommends the brother's immediate reappointment. A copy of the letter of recommendation signed by the Service Committee of his former congregation must be included. If the circuit overseer agrees based on the favorable recommendation of both bodies of elders, he will generate an appointment letter to be sent to the new body of elders and will inform the Service Department of the appointment using the *Notification of Appointment or Deletion* (S-2). If there are disqualifying factors mentioned or questions raised in the letter of introduction from the brother's former congregation, the circuit overseer may encourage the elders to wait until his visit to make the recommendation so that they have an opportunity to observe the brother for a time.
- *Appointments recommended by the branch office:* At times, the branch office will assign an appointed elder, such as a special pioneer or a graduate of the School for Kingdom Evangelizers, to serve in a particular congregation. In such cases, they will write to the circuit overseer to advise him that they recommend the

appointment. Thereafter, the circuit overseer may generate an appointment letter to the new congregation and will inform the Service Department using the *Notification of Appointment or Deletion* (S-2).

- **Other appointments:** The circuit overseer is responsible for the appointment of coordinators of the body of elders, assembly overseers, and assistant assembly overseers.—See 6:179.

53. Deletions of Elders and Ministerial Servants: The procedures are outlined below and in *Circuit Overseer Guidelines* (tg).

- **During the circuit overseer's visit:** Recommendations for deletion because of poor judgment not of a judicial nature are usually best considered with the elders during the visit of the circuit overseer. At the start of the circuit overseer's visit, the elders will provide any background information that will help the circuit overseer have a complete view of the qualifications of the brothers recommended for deletion. During his meeting with the elders later in the week, the circuit overseer will discuss the Scriptural qualifications of each brother. (*ks10* 3:15-21) He must not be hasty but should take adequate time to ensure that the consideration is thorough and complete. At any time, the circuit overseer should feel free to consult with the Service Department or another experienced circuit overseer. If the circuit overseer agrees with the recommendation, sometime following the discussion with the elders but before the end of the visit, the circuit overseer along with another elder will meet with the brother to inform him of his deletion. If the brother agrees with the decision, the circuit overseer will generate a deletion letter to the body of elders and inform

the Service Department using the *Notification of Appointment or Deletion* (S-2). If the brother disagrees with the decision, he will be informed of his right to appeal. The announcement to the congregation will be held in abeyance.—See 6:54.

- **Deletions between regular visits to a congregation:** If serious questions arise concerning a brother's qualifications and the next visit of the circuit overseer is not in the near future, the Congregation Service Committee may send the recommendation of the body of elders to the circuit overseer immediately. The letter should provide complete details and indicate whether the brother agrees with the recommendation or not. If the circuit overseer agrees with the recommendation and believes it should be processed immediately, he will generate a letter of deletion to be sent to the body of elders. If the brother accepts the decision, the announcement will be made at the next Service Meeting and the circuit overseer will inform the Service Department using the *Notification of Appointment or Deletion* (S-2).

If the brother disagrees with the recommendation for his deletion or it is an issue of poor judgment that is not widely known, the circuit overseer may decide to wait until his regular visit to consider the matter. However, if the circuit overseer believes it should be processed immediately, he will do as outlined above. If the brother does not accept the decision, he will be informed of his right to appeal. The announcement to the congregation will be held in abeyance.—See 6:54.

- **Resignations and deletions for judicial reasons or death:** The Congregation Service Committee will immediately inform the circuit

overseer of deletions of elders or ministerial servants because of judicial reproof, disassociation, disfellowshipping, or death. The circuit overseer will thereafter inform the Service Department using the *Notification of Appointment or Deletion* (S-2). In cases of reproof, he will also generate a deletion letter to the body of elders. If the Congregation Service Committee notifies the circuit overseer that a brother desires to resign for personal reasons and the circuit overseer accepts the resignation, the same procedure should be followed.

54. Appeals Involving Deletions of Elders and Ministerial Servants: If an elder or a ministerial servant disagrees with his deletion by the circuit overseer, he should be asked immediately to write a brief letter to the Service Department, with a copy to the body of elders and the circuit overseer, explaining why he disagrees with the deletion. The announcement of deletion will be held in abeyance. Thereafter, the Service Department will select an experienced circuit overseer who will then rehear the entire matter *with the original circuit overseer*. These two brothers will listen to the brother carefully and deal with him kindly and justly. They may consult with the Service Department for advice. After the two circuit overseers have heard the elder's concerns and reached a joint decision, there is no further appeal. If it is decided that the brother should be deleted, the announcement will be made at the next Service Meeting and the circuit overseer will inform the Service Department using the *Notification of Appointment or Deletion* (S-2).

55. In *very rare situations*, the Service Department oversight may see a need to select a **special committee** to consider an appeal involving the matter of brothers' qualifications to continue serving as elders. For example, a special committee may be needed in unusual and complex cases that involve the qualifications of

multiple elders or perhaps even an *entire body of elders*. The deskman, in consultation with Service Department oversight, will select the special committee from names provided by the circuit overseer and then provide direction to the special committee on its handling of the matter. (See 6:40.) After a thorough investigation and a meeting with the brothers involved, the special committee will then submit its comments and provide a recommendation to the *original circuit overseer and the other experienced circuit overseer*. (See 6:54.) If needed, the circuit overseers may consult with the Service Department. However, the *two circuit overseers*, not the special committee nor the branch office, will make the final determination regarding the qualifications of the brother(s) in question and inform the Service Department accordingly.

56. Distributing Documents on jw.org: Branches are notified when new and revised forms, letters, and outlines are posted on MDS. The Branch Committee will determine whether the item can be used in the branch territory without any adjustments. If so, it may be possible for the Service Department to create a link to the item under the *Documents* tab on the Web site. If only minor adjustments are needed, such as the insertion of letterheads, signature stamps, and the like, the Service Department may make the necessary adjustments and then upload the document to the local jw.org directory and create a link on the site. If the version posted on MDS requires significant adjustments, the Branch Committee should request approval from the appropriate Governing Body committee.

Processing Judicial Reports

57. Disfellowshippings and Disassociations: The elder serving as the chairman of a judicial committee (or "a committee" in the case of disassociation) is to submit one copy of the *Notification of Disfellowshipping or Disassociation* (S-77) to the Service Department. Usually there is no need for the elders serving

on the committee to submit additional correspondence about the case.

58. Role of Service Desk Secretary:

The Service Desk secretary will be responsible to review the S-77 form to make sure it is complete. If there is anything on the form that is not clear or is missing, the secretary will contact a member of the committee that submitted the form. It may be possible to obtain missing information by means of a telephone call. Once the Service Desk secretary has verified that the form is complete, he will enter the record into the electronic file used by the branch office. If the S-77 form is scanned into an electronic file, there is no need to keep a hard copy. Depending on local circumstances, it is left to each branch office to decide whether there is a need to send a brief acknowledgment to the chairman of the committee that the S-77 form has been received.

59. Role of Service Department

Deskman: Though it is not necessary for the deskman to review all S-77 forms, the secretary should be trained to alert the deskman to any unusual or weighty cases. The following list is not comprehensive but simply provides some examples of cases that should be forwarded to the deskman for consideration and careful handling:

- There is a question as to whether there is a valid judicial charge or sufficient evidence to support the charge.—*ks10* 5:2-37.
- The S-77 form reveals that the committee did not inform the individual of the decision.—*ks10* 6:9-10; 7:29-30.
- The individual does not agree with the decision of the original committee and the appeal committee and is now appealing his case to the branch office.—*ks10* 8:14-15.
- The original committee and the appeal committee do not agree on the decision.—*ks10* 8:16-18.

- The committee has submitted correspondence about the case in addition to the S-77 report.

60. The Service Department deskman and desk groups should not be quick to second-guess how a committee cared for a particular matter unless it is clear from the S-77 form and any additional correspondence submitted that the published guidelines in the *Shepherding* textbook and current letters to bodies of elders were not followed. In such cases, the deskman should write to the committee in an effort to help them bring the matter to a conclusion. Thereafter, the deskman or the secretary will update the branch office's files accordingly.

61. With reinstatements, the deskman would not usually need to review the information submitted unless there are some unusual factors. One exception is when it appears that sufficient time was not allowed for the individual to prove that his repentance is genuine. (*ks10* 11:3-5) Depending on the nature of the matter, the deskman may determine to provide the committee with some helpful reminders.

62. Use of Admin and jw.org Inbox

Feature: Branches using these tools will be able to process and store S-77 forms electronically. The following is a brief explanation of the procedure that they may choose to use:

- A member of the committee submits the S-77 form using the jw.org Inbox feature.
- Upon receipt, the S-77 form is assigned to a Service Desk secretary for review.
- When the secretary has determined that the form is complete, he will enter the record in the electronic file used by the branch office, such as *Tracking Persons*. An incident could be created linking the form to the tracked person. In the case of a reinstatement, the secretary would update the electronic record and retain the notification in the electronic file system.

- If the S-77 form needs further review by a deskman, the secretary will pass this on to him. After the deskman has completed his review, he will return the correspondence to the secretary who will then update any electronic record of the matter.
- If needed, hard copies of S-77 forms can be scanned into Admin. A record of the matter can be entered into *Tracking Persons*. Any hard copy should be shredded.

63. Rescissions: On occasion, the deskman may determine that the elders have erred in announcing a disfellowshipping. Perhaps the wrongdoing committed did not warrant a judicial committee or some other error in judgment occurred. The disfellowshipping may need to be *rescinded*. Before proceeding, the Branch Committee should review the case. If the Branch Committee agrees that the judicial action should be rescinded, then the deskman will write to the judicial committee to explain the errors in judgment. The letter to the judicial committee should explain that the announcement to the congregation should state: "The announcement that [name of person] is no longer one of Jehovah's Witnesses has been rescinded." The letter to the judicial committee will request that the committee reply in writing to the branch office, providing the date when the rescission was announced. Once the date is received, the records should be updated.

64. Appeal Committees: The circuit overseer is authorized to appoint an appeal committee. For details on the formation of an appeal committee and the correspondence to be received from it, see *Circuit Overseer Guidelines*, chapter 14.

Forming Congregations

65. A circuit overseer will assist in organizing the formation of a new congregation if and when it is advisable to do so. A completed *Congregation Application Information* (S-51) form may be submit-

ted to the branch office. Generally, the circuit overseer will sign the application.

66. In congregations with no appointed elders, one or more experienced ministerial servants (or a baptized sister if a baptized brother is not available) may be designated to handle the work in lieu of an appointed coordinator of the body of elders until one can be appointed.

67. When the Service Department gives approval for the **formation or dissolution of a congregation**, the circuit overseer will proceed with the appointment of elders and ministerial servants in their respective congregations, using the *Notification of Appointment or Deletion*. (See 6:52.) Care should be taken to see that all elders and ministerial servants are accounted for and appointed to serve with one of the congregations involved. The territory assignment for each respective congregation should be provided. In addition, various printed letters that the new congregation needs for its files should be sent. If there is a large amount of literature on hand, it would be best for the congregations to divide it instead of requesting additional literature for the new congregation. The branch office will determine how many copies of *Our Kingdom Ministry* to send, based on the number of publishers and pioneers associated with each respective congregation.

Territories

68. Territory Assignments: The Service Department gives each congregation an assignment of territory to work. The Branch Committee and the deskmen monitor the preaching activity in the field, making all reasonable efforts to ensure that the branch territory is thoroughly covered.—See 6:168.

69. Congregations With Seldom Worked Territory: If congregations are in need of assistance in working their assigned territory, the congregations and circuit overseers will report this to the branch office. The deskman will consider what can be done to provide assistance. If it is not possible to

make arrangements to assist the congregation to cover its territory and the territory has not been worked for two years, the circuit overseer should recommend to the branch office which sections of the congregation's territory should be assigned to other nearby congregations or listed as unassigned territory.

70. Caring for Unassigned Territory:

The Branch Committee should make all reasonable efforts to cover all unassigned territory at least once a year. A letter may be sent each year to congregations, inviting publishers to apply to work unassigned territory. This letter should include a list of the territories that need to be worked. Individuals willing to assist may indicate to the branch office which territory they would like to work, the number in their group, and the amount of time they can spend in an assignment. (Groups should not be made up solely of single brothers and single sisters.) A group captain should be designated. This information is to be given to the Congregation Service Committee for approval and forwarding to the branch. The Service Department considers the information, makes an appropriate territory assignment, and informs the group captain. After the assignment is completed, the group captain should submit a report to the branch office, outlining what was accomplished and any outstanding experiences.

71. In countries where there are few publishers and large densely populated areas to cover, the Branch Committee may feel that a **special campaign** would be beneficial. In some cases, it may be possible to invite native publishers who are living in other lands to return and share in the special campaign. Publishers in other countries who speak the local language may also be invited. The Branch Committee should send a recommendation to the Service Committee for its consideration and approval.

72. Publishers Living in Isolated Territory: The Service Department should send the names of isolated pub-

lishers to the congregations nearest them. Perhaps an elder or pioneer can visit them from time to time to encourage them and to work with them in the field ministry. The branch office should make arrangements for them to receive literature and *Our Kingdom Ministry*, along with any other necessary information. If practical, they could send their field service reports through the nearest congregation and obtain literature there as well. Otherwise, they may request literature from the branch office and report their field service directly to the branch each month, marking "isolated publisher" or "isolated pioneer" on the report. Only one person in the group should make arrangements for obtaining literature.

73. The role of the circuit overseer in caring for isolated publishers and pioneers is outlined in *Circuit Overseer Guidelines*. If reasonably possible, the circuit overseer should adjust his schedule in order to visit such ones each year. After receiving the circuit overseer's report for the annual visit, the Service Desk will send the isolated publisher, pioneer, or group a warm and encouraging letter. **A record should be kept of all such publishers and groups**, with a separate file for each, until such time as they can either be associated with a nearby congregation or be organized into a new congregation. Then the information in this file is put into the file for that congregation.

74. Special pioneers have been assigned to visit isolated publishers and groups, with good results. Where there is potential to form a new congregation, temporary special pioneers or special pioneers could be assigned.

75. When a regular pioneer requests a permanent assignment to care for an unassigned territory, the branch office will write a letter, enclosing an *Isolated Territory Assignment* (S-63). Only one regular pioneer would be given a certain isolated territory assignment. If more than one pioneer will be working in the

same isolated assignment, the other pioneers are assigned by a letter from the office to work with the pioneer holding the territory. The pioneer holding the territory is responsible for making the necessary reports to the branch office on the progress being made in the territory.

76. Foreign-Language Territory:

The Branch Committee and the deskmen should be aware of immigrant communities or indigenous language groups that need to receive a witness. The Service Department and circuit overseers should be guided by what is published on this subject in *Circuit Overseer Guidelines*, *Circuit Organization Guidelines*, the letter to all bodies of elders dated October 2, 2014, and the letter to all circuit overseers dated October 3, 2014.—See also *km* 11/09, pp. 3-5.

77. If there is a sizable population of foreign-speaking people in the branch territory and few publishers are available who speak their language, a **foreign-language class** may be held to train capable publishers and pioneers. Before a language class is held, the branch must identify and train language instructors. Potential instructors must meet the qualifications outlined in *Instructions for Organizing Language Classes* (S-367). A request to train the recommended foreign-language instructors should be submitted to the Service Committee for approval. The Service Committee will arrange for those who have been approved to attend the course "Teaching Methods for Accelerated Language Learning." Following the training course, the branch may arrange to hold the foreign-language classes. (Helpful forms for organizing the classes are posted on MDS.) These classes should not be held at the branch office. They should be conducted in the foreign-language territory that is being targeted.—See 7:131; *tg* chap. 17.

78. Prison Witnessing: The Service Department should organize the preaching work in prisons according to the latest direction received from the Service

Committee. (See the letter to all bodies of elders dated September 8, 2011.) A record should be maintained of congregations assigned to care for each prison facility in the country. It should also be noted whether literature can be taken into the prison by the publishers or must be mailed directly from the branch office.

79. Harbor Witnessing: The Service Department should organize harbor witnessing in harmony with the guidelines provided by the Service Committee. (See "Materials for Harbor Witnessing" on MDS as well as the letter to all bodies of elders dated July 15, 2014.) Each branch office may need to adapt the material to the local circumstances of its territory. In most cases, official authorization to enter port terminals and to board ships must also be obtained. Fees for processing applications and making photo identification may be required, which is the personal responsibility of the applicant. Publishers should not get involved with seaman's missions or other religious organizations in carrying out harbor witnessing.

Conventions and Assemblies

80. Regional Conventions: Annually, circuit overseers submit the *Convention Program Participant Ratings* form (S-306) to the branch office. This form identifies the **elders who are qualified as convention speakers** and their individual ratings. In larger branch offices, these records are kept in Admin. Brothers who are approved Bethel speakers may be invited to inform the Service Department of the convention(s) that they will attend so that they may be assigned talks. If Bethel speakers volunteer to attend additional conventions using their own personal time away and at their own expense, they may be assigned where there is a need for convention speakers.—See 7:13-32, 71-72.

81. The Service Department will make assignments based on each brother's speaker ratings and the convention speaker grid provided annually by the

Teaching Committee. Generally, the chairman and the drama directors are assigned and notified first, followed by the Bethel speakers, and then local speakers are assigned the remaining parts. Service Department oversight will approve all convention speaker assignments before assignment letters are mailed out.—See 7:30, 71-72.

82. Circuit Assemblies: Two one-day circuit assemblies will be held each year. One assembly (CA-br) will have a visiting branch representative assigned to speak. The other assembly (CA-co) will be served by the circuit overseer without a branch representative being assigned. Arrangements are made according to the guidelines provided each year by the Teaching Committee. Helpful guidance is also found in *Circuit Organization Guidelines* (S-330).—See 7:2-12, 73.

83. The branch will assign the dates of circuit assemblies based on the number of publishers in a circuit and the size and availability of meeting locations. It may be necessary to divide a circuit into two or more sections and have separate assemblies. Circuit overseers will be notified preferably one year or more in advance in order to obtain assembly facilities. If possible, the two annual circuit assembly programs should be separated by at least three or four months. *Circuit Overseer Guidelines* has additional information.

Regular Pioneers

84. Direction regarding the appointment and activity of pioneers is found in the latest publications on congregation organization and in the letter to all bodies of elders dated August 25, 2014. Those leaving an assignment of special full-time service will not experience an interruption in their full-time service history if they are appointed as regular pioneers within three months. Regular pioneers who are sentenced to prison because of their Christian neutrality will have their full-time service history recorded as uninterrupted if they resume the full-time ministry within three

months of their release from prison. (See 4:24-25.) Regular pioneers who accept alternative civilian service may continue serving as regular pioneers if they can reasonably meet the requirements for regular pioneers. When reviewing their overall activity, the elders should show consideration for their unique circumstances when determining whether they qualify to continue serving as pioneers. A person who is performing alternative civilian service may be appointed as a regular pioneer if he is otherwise qualified and is able to fulfill the hour requirement.

85. Transfers to Other Branch Territories: When a pioneer moves to another country, the local branch should send to the new branch the regular pioneer record from Admin. If questions arise about the pioneer's history, the new branch may communicate with the other branch offices that are involved.

86. Infirm Regular Pioneers: When recommendations are received and an individual meets the requirements as outlined in *Circuit Overseer Guidelines*, chapter 19, he may be designated as an infirm pioneer. The Service Department will write to the pioneer, explaining the arrangement, and a copy of this letter will be sent to the body of elders. This adjustment in the pioneer's enrollment should be noted in the records of the branch office.

Temporary Special Pioneers

87. Temporary special pioneers serve in the same manner as special pioneers. However, they are appointed to serve in **one-year increments** for up to a maximum of three years. This temporary assignment will enhance their qualifications, allowing them to gain experience and to be further evaluated by the branch office. It could be a stepping-stone to a future assignment as a substitute circuit overseer, a special pioneer, a circuit overseer, or a field missionary or to Bethel service. Temporary special pioneers receive their assignment from the Service Department; they do not se-

lect their own. Individuals do not apply to become temporary special pioneers. Rather, well-qualified, local single regular pioneers and married regular pioneer couples without children are identified and invited to submit a *Questionnaire for Prospective Temporary Special Pioneer* (S-207).—See 6:110.

88. Assignments: Single temporary special pioneers will ordinarily be assigned in pairs. If married, both mates would need to qualify to serve together as temporary special pioneers. Generally, temporary special pioneers are assigned to remote areas with a ratio of 1 publisher to at least 3,000 or more inhabitants to open up new territories, including those in foreign- or indigenous-language fields. Most branches have territories that are seldom worked or are remote and isolated where there are interested ones and where there is good potential for forming a congregation. Many countries have densely populated urban centers with few publishers in the inner cities. In many lands there is a great need for qualified brothers to help men reach out to become ministerial servants and elders or where the brothers need more training to care for their congregation responsibilities.—See 6:110.

89. Qualifications: A prospective temporary special pioneer is a well-qualified and effective regular pioneer and is usually a graduate of the School for Kingdom Evangelizers or a graduate of the former Bible School for Single Brothers or Bible School for Christian Couples. **The candidate should be a citizen or legal resident, must be between 21 and 45 years of age, baptized three years or longer, in full-time service at least two years, in good health, and able to maintain an active schedule.** Any exceptions must be approved by the Service Committee. If a branch has additional needs in the field, circuit overseers may recommend others who are not graduates of the above-named theocratic schools by submitting a *Personal Qualifications Report* (S-326) to the branch office for review. There is no arrange-

ment for appointing as temporary special pioneers those who have a minor child still living at home. It is preferred that the focus be on appointing single men and married couples who have the potential for taking on greater responsibility. However, if such ones are not available, well-qualified single sisters may serve as temporary special pioneers. If there is an exceptional need that cannot be cared for locally, then the Branch Committee should submit a *Request for Field Missionaries* (S-218) form to the Service Committee. Unless directed to do so by the Service Committee, the Branch Committee should not request help from other branch offices to fill special needs in the field.—See 6:106.

90. Quota: The Service Committee establishes the total number of temporary special pioneers that may be appointed in each country. If the Branch Committee sees a need to increase the quota of temporary special pioneers, a request should be sent to the Service Committee, stating the number to be added, why they are needed, the number expected to graduate from the School for Kingdom Evangelizers in the coming year, and the publisher-to-population ratios of the language fields where they would be assigned.

91. Graduates of the School for Kingdom Evangelizers: Based on the recommendations of the instructors, the Service Department will determine which graduates in each class could be recommended to the Branch Committee to serve as temporary special pioneers. For more details, see chapter 10 of *School for Kingdom Evangelizers Office Guidelines*.

92. Nongraduates of the School for Kingdom Evangelizers: A candidate who is a local regular pioneer will be evaluated by the Service Department, based on the *Personal Qualifications Report* (S-326) and any recommendation submitted by the circuit overseer. The Service Department will decide whether to recommend to the Branch Committee that a regular pioneer be appointed as a

temporary special pioneer. If approved, the regular pioneer can be sent a letter (S-225) explaining the temporary special pioneer arrangement with the request that he fill out a *Questionnaire for Prospective Temporary Special Pioneer* (S-207). The completed questionnaire is to be carefully checked by the Service Department and thereafter reviewed by two members of the Branch Committee. If they approve, the Service Department will prepare a letter (S-220) appointing the temporary special pioneer and informing him of the location of his assignment, copying the elders of the congregation he will be working with and the circuit overseer.

93. File: A file folder is made to hold a copy of the assignment letter, the questionnaire, and other correspondence related to the temporary special pioneer. His enrollment code in Admin is adjusted to show his start date as a temporary special pioneer (FTS). A record of his monthly field service is maintained in Admin.

94. Hour Requirement: The temporary special pioneer hour requirement is 130 hours a month. Sisters who are 40 years of age or older have a requirement of 120 hours a month. It is understood that a temporary special pioneer who serves as a congregation elder in a remote area may at times be needed for additional short-term theocratic assignments. For example, he may need to serve on a special committee or a Disaster Relief Committee, help with circuit or convention organization, assist in the construction or renovation of his own Kingdom Hall, or serve as a substitute circuit overseer. In addition, he may be needed for a brief period of time to train local elders to care for their responsibilities on a Hospital Liaison Committee. In exceptional situations, the travel time to attend an assigned circuit assembly, regional convention, or Kingdom Ministry School may be unusually long. If such assignments prevent him from making his hour requirement, a brief explanation, as well as the number

of hours spent, should be included on the monthly report submitted on jw.org or on his monthly S-212 report. An explanation should also be written in the "Remarks" column of the *Congregation's Publisher Record* (S-21) card. However, the hours spent should not be included in the "Hours" column. The branch will also mark the Admin records and consider the remarks when performing the annual review.

95. Evaluation Program: All temporary special pioneers are enrolled in an evaluation program that includes an annual review by the Service Department. The purpose of this evaluation program is to allow the Branch Committee to test the fitness, abilities, circumstances, and effectiveness of a temporary special pioneer and to determine how he may best be used in the future. It is not expected that all temporary special pioneers will be given an extension for a second or a third year. During the annual review, the Branch Committee should extend only those who are effective in this role and who are qualified to take on greater responsibility. For more information, see chapter 13 of *School for Kingdom Evangelizers Office Guidelines*.

96. After a temporary special pioneer has been in his assignment for ten months, the Service Department should request and review the *Personal Qualifications Reports* (S-326) submitted by the circuit overseer. The department will determine whether the temporary special pioneer is reaching his hour requirement, is productive in starting and conducting Bible studies, is showing a keen interest in aiding those associated with the congregation, and is enjoying and promoting good relations with others. If the report is positive, two members of the Branch Committee can extend the temporary special pioneer appointment for another year. Only productive individuals obtaining good results should be given an extension in the temporary special pioneer work for an additional year. If the report is negative or if it is clear that a brother, a sister, or a married cou-

ple is not able to serve effectively in the temporary special pioneer work, it would be appropriate for the Service Department to write a letter directing that the individual or the couple return to the regular pioneer work. The letter would also express appreciation for their service.

97. At any time, the branch office may determine that a temporary special pioneer could be used more effectively in some other form of special full-time service. For example, brothers who are graduates of the School for Kingdom Evangelizers may qualify to receive training in the circuit work.—See chapters 10 and 13 of *School for Kingdom Evangelizers Office Guidelines*.

98. Completion of Evaluation Program: It is understood that temporary special pioneers who have successfully completed the three-year evaluation program have proved themselves and have potential for greater service. The Branch Committee must determine how best to use them.

99. Some temporary special pioneers who have successfully completed the three-year evaluation program may be appointed as special pioneers. Other individuals may qualify for the circuit work, and the branch may appoint such individuals as special pioneers, inviting them to complete the *Questionnaire for Prospective Circuit Overseer* (S-323). If after reviewing the questionnaire the Branch Committee agrees that the individual qualifies to be a circuit overseer, it may submit a recommendation to the Governing Body.—See 2:30.

100. In exceptional cases, the Branch Committee may feel that certain temporary special pioneers who have completed the three-year evaluation program have the circumstances and stamina to serve well as field missionaries in another country. In most cases, each mate must be between the ages of 25 and 45. Fluency in English is not a requirement. **In addition to their spiritual qualities,**

they may speak a foreign language or be adept at learning new languages or their ethnic and family background or citizenship might equip them to fill a specific need in another land. The branch may appoint such individuals as special pioneers and send them the cover letter for field missionary candidates (S-251), inviting them to complete the *Questionnaire for Prospective Field Missionary* (S-214). The completed questionnaire and, if needed, an English translation of the candidate's responses along with a numbered letter should be submitted to the Service Committee, explaining in detail the qualifications, language abilities, ethnic and family background, and citizenship(s) of each individual. Please include an English translation of the latest *Personal Qualifications Report* (S-326) that was submitted by the circuit overseer.—See 6:117.

101. Those who have completed the three-year evaluation program and who are fluent in English may in time be included in the Branch Committee's consideration of exceptional candidates to be recommended for additional training at Gilead School.—See 6:190.

102. Allowances: Temporary special pioneers receive the same monthly allowance as special pioneers. (See 6:121.) In addition to the regular monthly personal allowance, temporary special pioneers may request a travel and housing allowance up to the amount approved for the country by the Publishing Committee. The housing allowance may be given to temporary special pioneers according to the actual amount they pay for housing and utilities up to the maximum shown on the *Record of Allowance* form (A-29). Any exception for high-rent areas should be referred to the Publishing Committee. Temporary special pioneers who are using personal time away or who are ill are eligible to continue to receive their regular monthly allowance. Temporary special pioneers are allowed to do limited secular work as long as it does not interfere with their meeting the hour requirement. If a temporary special

pioneer needs some assistance to cover his actual round-trip travel expenses to attend his assigned circuit assembly, regional convention, or Kingdom Ministry School, the Branch Committee may reimburse actual travel expenses upon request. This provision is not to be advertised and is intended only to cover unusually high travel expenses that may be involved to reach the assigned assembly or school.

103. Temporary special pioneers receive the same Personal Expense Account (PEA) credits as special pioneers. (See 5:22.) They may also benefit from an Automobile Expense Account (AEA) if that arrangement is available in the country.—See 5:14.

104. Moving Expenses: If it is necessary to reassign temporary special pioneers, it is usually best to select a territory that is not too distant from their preceding assignment in order to avoid unnecessary expenses. If a temporary special pioneer cannot personally cover the expense of the transfer, he may request assistance from the branch. The Branch Committee may reimburse each temporary special pioneer up to USD 500, depending on his needs. If the cost is more, then the recommendation for reimbursement should be referred to the Service Committee.

105. Experiencing Difficulties: If a temporary special pioneer falls short of his hour requirement for two or three months or encounters serious health issues and is physically unable to meet the requirement, the Service Department may submit a recommendation for his deletion to two members of the Branch Committee for approval. It would be appropriate for the Service Department to write a letter to the temporary special pioneer, expressing appreciation for his service and encouraging him to continue working hard but directing that he return to the regular pioneer work. If the temporary special pioneer objects to the recommendation, he may submit a letter of appeal to the Branch Committee. The

entire Branch Committee is responsible for making the final determination.

106. Marriage: If a single temporary special pioneer becomes engaged to be married, he or she should inform the Service Department right away. If the temporary special pioneer indicates that he or she wishes to continue in the temporary special pioneer work along with his or her prospective mate, the branch should immediately request a confidential *Personal Qualifications Report* (S-326) from the temporary special pioneer's body of elders and one from his or her circuit overseer.

- **If the prospective mate lives in the branch territory,** the branch should send him or her a *Questionnaire for Prospective Temporary Special Pioneer* (S-207) to fill out. In addition, the prospective mate's body of elders and circuit overseer should be asked to complete separate *Personal Qualifications Reports* (S-326).
- **If the prospective mate does not live in the branch territory,** the Branch Committee should obtain the S-207 and S-326 forms from the respective branch office along with their recommendation.

The Branch Committee will review the temporary special pioneer's qualifications and those of his or her prospective mate, taking into consideration the reputation and the physical health and stamina of each one. (See 6:89.) If there is a great difference in age between the two who are planning to marry, the Branch Committee should carefully consider whether this would cause negative talk or be a stumbling block to others. If the temporary special pioneer and the prospective mate are qualified, the Branch Committee may enroll them as temporary special pioneers together, effective the date of their marriage. Otherwise, the temporary special pioneer should discontinue his service prior to his marriage. (See 6:130.) It could be that, in time, the couple would qualify to serve together as temporary special pioneers.

107. Pregnancy: A temporary special pioneer couple who learn that they are to be parents should inform the branch immediately. The couple should be given a period of three months to get settled, during which they will continue to receive their monthly allowance. During this three-month period, the couple will need to locate suitable accommodations and find employment, so it is not expected that they will meet their monthly hour requirement. If one or both mates wish to become regular pioneers, they will have an additional three months to make the transition and their full-time service history would continue uninterrupted.

108. Personal Time Away: A sample letter to all special pioneers that explains the personal time away arrangement is available on MDS. A copy of this letter should be sent to newly enrolled temporary special pioneers along with their appointment letter (S-220).

Special Pioneers

109. As members of the Worldwide Order, special pioneers are provided with a modest allowance to assist them with their living expenses. They receive their assignment from the Service Department; they do not select their own. Individuals do not apply to become special pioneers. Rather, qualified temporary special pioneers are identified and approached as to their willingness and availability to accept an assignment.

110. Assignments: Single special pioneers will ordinarily be assigned in pairs. For married couples, both mates would need to qualify to serve together as special pioneers. Generally, special pioneers are assigned to open up new territories, including those in foreign- or indigenous-language fields in remote areas that have a ratio of 1 publisher to at least 3,000 or more inhabitants. Most branches have territories that are seldom worked or are remote and isolated but have interested ones and good potential for forming a congregation. Many countries have densely populated urban cen-

ters with few publishers in the inner cities. In many lands there is a great need for qualified brothers to help men reach out to become ministerial servants and elders or where the brothers need more training to care for their congregation responsibilities.

- If there is an exceptional need, the Branch Committee may assign temporary special pioneers, special pioneers, and circuit overseers to any country *overseen by the branch office*. Care should be taken so that the costs involved in such transfers and the acquiring of legal residency are kept to a minimum. Since a key objective of the School for Kingdom Evangelizers and the temporary special pioneer arrangement is to help more local brothers and sisters to reach out to meet the needs *within their own country*, those who are assigned by the branch office to serve in another country should keep that focus in mind. Any exceptional situations should be referred to the Service Committee.—See 6:87-88.
- Branch offices are not authorized to transfer special pioneers to *other branch territories*. Such requests or recommendations should be referred to the Service Committee.

111. Qualifications: Care should be exercised in appointing special pioneers. Since temporary special pioneers will fill most needs, any who are appointed as special pioneers should be exceptional individuals who have proved themselves as temporary special pioneers for three years. The Branch Committee also needs to consider carefully the age, health, and circumstances of an individual before appointing him as a special pioneer.

- There is no automatic arrangement for transferring those serving at Bethel or in some other form of special full-time service into the special pioneer work. The branch office has the weighty responsibility of appointing *qualified* candidates to serve as special

pioneers. As an exception, the Branch Committee may appoint as special pioneers those who have been in special full-time service for many years (usually 15 years or more). Some might have less than 15 years of special full-time service but are in good health and have the stamina and spiritual qualifications to serve anywhere the branch office may need them. All circuit overseers reaching 70 years of age will be transferred to serve as special pioneers.—See 6:152-153.

112. Consideration should be given to those who have demonstrated a genuine interest in helping people, an ability to get results, and a determination to stick with an assignment when things are difficult. We want dedicated, hardworking brothers and sisters to be special pioneers, not those who may be disinterested in the work or who are more concerned about material benefits than about the privilege of sharing in this spiritually upbuilding work. We desire to appoint those who are devoted to God and who take seriously their commission as ministers. The primary purpose behind the special pioneer work is to add impetus to the preaching of the good news in areas where little is being done. In addition, the rigorous schedule requires stamina and good health. In isolated areas, upbuilding association may be limited. Appointees should be encouraged to view themselves and their circumstances realistically.

113. Quota: The Service Committee establishes the total number of special pioneers that may be appointed in each country. If the Branch Committee sees a need to increase the quota of special pioneers, a request should be sent to the Service Committee, stating the number to be added, why they are needed, and the publisher-to-population ratios of the language fields where they would be assigned.

114. Appointing New Special Pioneers: If the Service Department iden-

tifies a need in the field that cannot be met by the use of temporary special pioneers, it can consider appointing special pioneers. A candidate for special pioneer service should be selected from those who have successfully completed three years in the temporary special pioneer work. If the Branch Committee approves the recommendation from the Service Department, the temporary special pioneer should be sent a letter explaining the special pioneer arrangement, with the request that he fill out a *Questionnaire for Prospective Special Pioneer* (S-208). The completed questionnaire is to be carefully checked by the Service Department, and if all is in order, it is forwarded to the Branch Committee for approval. If the appointment is approved, the Service Department sends the special pioneer an assignment letter, copying the elders of the congregation he will be working with and the circuit overseer.

- In branch territories with just a few circuits, the branch office may have in mind assigning an appointed circuit overseer to serve temporarily as a special pioneer. Before doing so, please provide the Service Committee with information about the brother you plan to reassign. If the brother and his wife, if married, could be used in the circuit work in another land for perhaps up to three years, provide a recent *Personal Qualifications Report* (S-326), translated into English, along with a cover letter describing his qualifications, his citizenship, and the language(s) in which he is fluent. It may be that he could be used in a nearby country where there is a need for circuit overseers.

115. File: A file folder is made to hold a copy of the assignment letter, the questionnaire, the vow of poverty, and other correspondence related to the special pioneer. His enrollment code in Admin is adjusted to show his start date as a special pioneer (FS). A record of his monthly field service is maintained in Admin.—See 6:181.

116. Hour Requirement: The special pioneer hour requirement is 130 hours a month. Sisters who are 40 years of age or older have a requirement of 120 hours a month. It is understood that a special pioneer who serves as a congregation elder in a remote area may at times be needed for additional short-term theocratic assignments. For example, he may need to serve on a special committee or a Disaster Relief Committee, help with circuit or convention organization, assist in the construction or renovation of his own Kingdom Hall, or serve as a substitute circuit overseer. In addition, he may be needed for a brief period of time to train local elders to care for their responsibilities on a Hospital Liaison Committee. In exceptional situations, the travel time to attend an assigned circuit assembly, regional convention, or Kingdom Ministry School may be unusually long. If such assignments prevent him from making his hour requirement, a brief explanation, as well as the number of hours spent, should be included on the monthly report submitted on jw.org or on his monthly S-212 report. An explanation should also be written in the "Remarks" column of the *Congregation's Publisher Record* (S-21) card. However, the hours spent should not be included in the "Hours" column. The branch will also mark the Admin records and consider the remarks when performing the annual review.

117. Annual Review: Each September, the Service Department should review the activity of all special pioneers to see whether they are productive and are fulfilling the requirements of their special form of service. The Branch Committee may feel that certain younger special pioneers with a minimum of three years in special full-time service could serve well as field missionaries in another country. The factors to be considered and the steps to be followed to make such recommendations are outlined in 6:100.

118. If concerns about the activities of a special pioneer are reported, the Service Department may write to the elders

and/or the circuit overseer to obtain their observations. Once the facts are known, the Service Department may write a letter of counsel and offer helpful suggestions or may direct the circuit overseer to approach the pioneer privately about the area of concern. If the special pioneer is a single sister, the circuit overseer should be accompanied by a local elder.

119. The special pioneer should be given the opportunity to improve over a reasonable period of time and be commended on any progress made. If there is no response to repeated efforts to assist the special pioneer and the Service Department is convinced that he no longer qualifies, a recommendation can be made to the Branch Committee that he be deleted from that privilege of service. In most cases, a special pioneer with less than 15 years of special full-time service who is consistently unable to meet his monthly hour requirement because of serious and debilitating health problems, perhaps for six months or so, should leave special full-time service. If married, careful consideration needs to be given as to whether the other mate should continue as a special pioneer. What would be in the best interests of the couple and of the organization? Would it be good to transition both of them out of special full-time service? (See 6:130.) If the Branch Committee feels that one mate should continue as a special pioneer while the other should not, then please provide your recommendation to the Service Committee. Extra consideration should be shown to those who are 50 years of age or older, or who have 15 or more years in special full-time service.—See 6:124.

120. Reassignment: If necessary, special pioneers may be moved after three years. However, there is no need to adjust an assignment of a special pioneer unless circumstances necessitate such a move. If a special pioneer requests to be assigned to another congregation, the Service Department should consider the needs of the field, factoring in any extenuating circumstances.

121. Allowances: A special pioneer's personal, travel, PEA, and housing allowances are established for each country by the Publishing Committee. (See 5:10.) A special pioneer may also benefit from an Automobile Expense Account (AEA) if that arrangement is available in the country. (See 5:14.) A special pioneer may not receive a double allowance unless exceptional approval is given by the Service Committee. The housing allowance may be given to special pioneers according to the average of the actual amount they pay for housing and utilities up to the maximum shown on the Record of Allowance form (A-29). Any exception for high-rent areas should be referred to the Publishing Committee. Special pioneers who are on an approved leave of absence, who are using personal time away, or who are ill are eligible to continue to receive their regular monthly allowance and PEA as long as they continue as special full-time servants. If a special pioneer needs some assistance to cover his actual round-trip travel expenses to attend his congregation's assigned circuit assembly, regional convention, or Kingdom Ministry School, the Branch Committee may reimburse actual travel expenses upon request. This provision is not to be advertised and is intended only to cover unusually high travel expenses that may be incurred in order to reach the assigned assembly or school.

122. Allowances and PEA credits are given regardless of the time spent in the field service month by month. Special pioneers are allowed to do limited secular work as long as it does not interfere with their meeting the hour requirement.

123. Moving Expenses: When re-assigning special pioneers, it is good to select a territory that is not too distant from their preceding assignment, in order to avoid unnecessary expenses. If a special pioneer cannot personally cover the expense of the transfer, he may request assistance from the branch. The Branch Committee may reimburse each

special pioneer up to USD 500, depending on his needs. If the cost is more, then the recommendation for reimbursement should be referred to the Service Committee.

124. Infirm Special Pioneers: If a special pioneer with less than 15 years of special full-time service is consistently unable to meet his monthly hour requirement because of serious and debilitating health problems, perhaps for six months or so, then it may be best for the person to leave the special full-time service. On the other hand, for those who are 50 years of age or older or who have 15 or more years in special full-time service, a **reduced hour requirement may be appropriate.** To determine a reasonable hour goal, the branch office should receive a recommendation from the special pioneer's body of elders and one from the circuit overseer before submitting the recommendation to the Service Committee. For reporting purposes, **all special pioneers with an approved reduced hour requirement should be given the FSI enrollment code.** Periodically, the branch should review the circumstances of the special pioneers to determine whether the reduction is still needed or whether a further reduction should be recommended to the Service Committee. If an infirm special pioneer is once again able to reach the full hour requirement, the branch may adjust the person's enrollment to FS without consulting with the Service Committee. In most cases, a reduced hour requirement is better than no hour requirement at all. The recommendation that a special pioneer have no hour requirement is usually reserved for special pioneers who have extremely limiting circumstances because of advanced age or life-threatening health issues and whose hour requirement has already been progressively reduced.—See 6:119, 128.

125. Marriage: If a single special pioneer becomes engaged to be married, he or she should inform the Service Department right away. If the special pioneer indicates that he or she wishes

to continue in the special pioneer work along with his or her prospective mate, the branch should immediately request a confidential *Personal Qualifications Report* (S-326) from the special pioneer's body of elders and one from his or her circuit overseer.

- **If the prospective mate lives in the branch territory,** the branch should send him or her a *Questionnaire for Prospective Special Pioneer* (S-208) to fill out. In addition, the prospective mate's body of elders and circuit overseer should be asked to complete separate *Personal Qualifications Reports* (S-326).
- **If the prospective mate does not live in the branch territory,** the Branch Committee should obtain the S-208 and S-326 forms from the respective branch office along with their recommendation.

The Branch Committee will review the special pioneer's qualifications and those of his or her prospective mate, taking into consideration the reputation and the physical health and stamina of each one. The prospective mate **should be at least 21 years old, baptized three years or longer, in full-time service for at least two years, in good health, and able to maintain an active schedule.** If there is a great difference in age between the two who are planning to marry, the Branch Committee should consider carefully whether this would cause negative talk or be a stumbling block to others. If the special pioneer and the prospective mate are qualified, the Branch Committee may enroll them as special pioneers together, effective the date of their marriage. Otherwise, the Branch Committee will need to consider carefully whether it would be best for the special pioneer to discontinue his or her service prior to marriage. If the special pioneer does not agree with the Branch Committee's decision or if the case is unusual, the Branch Committee may submit the matter along with its recommendation to the Service Committee. If the prospective mate does not qualify, then the engaged special pioneer

should be informed that he or she will need to discontinue special full-time service prior to his or her marriage. If there is a situation that merits an exception to this policy, please provide details to the Service Committee. It is understood that in some exceptional situations it may be appropriate for one mate to continue as a special pioneer while the other mate does not.—See 6:130.

126. Pregnancy: A special pioneer couple who learn that they are to be parents should inform the branch immediately. The couple should be given a period of three months to get settled, during which they will continue to receive their monthly allowance. During this three-month period, the couple will need to locate suitable accommodations and find employment, so it is not expected that they will meet their monthly hour requirement. If one or both mates wish to become regular pioneers, they will have an additional three months to make the transition and their full-time service history would continue uninterrupted.

127. There is no provision for former special pioneers to be reappointed when a minor child is still living at home. If in the past the branch allowed a special pioneer couple to continue in that work while raising one or two children, it would be good to review the special pioneers' activity to determine whether they are still effective in their ministry. In all cases, it is up to the Branch Committee to evaluate the circumstances of special pioneers to decide whether they should remain in special full-time service. For information on transitional financial assistance, see 6:130.

128. Personal Time Away: A sample letter to all special pioneers that explains the personal time away arrangement is available on MDS. A copy of this letter should be sent to newly enrolled special pioneers along with their assignment letter and supply of forms. There may be no need for the Service Department to maintain personal time away records for infirm special pioneers who because of

advanced age or chronic ailment no longer have a specific monthly hour requirement. That matter can be decided by the Branch Committee.—See 6:124.

129. Leave of Absence: The branch office is authorized to grant leave of absence time to all special full-time servants in the field, such as special pioneers, circuit overseers, field missionaries, and field instructors. If a **serious health matter or a family emergency** arises, the person should write or telephone the branch office and explain the situation in detail. There is no need for the person to use all of his accumulated personal time away to care for a serious health matter or a family emergency. However, it may be reasonable for the person to combine some of his personal time away with a leave of absence granted to him by the branch office. The Service Department overseer or his assistant is authorized to grant special full-time servants in the field **up to 14 calendar days, including Saturdays and Sundays, of leave of absence** in any service year. The Service Department overseer or his assistant *and* a member of the Branch Committee may grant these individuals **up to 30 calendar days of leave** in any service year. Any additional request for leave of absence should be handled by the Branch Committee. Though the granting of leave of absence to special full-time servants in the field is left to the Branch Committee to handle, any case that would involve granting **more than 90 calendar days of leave of absence** in any service year should be referred to the Service Committee. **The Branch Committee should grant leave of absence time progressively**, based on the circumstances, rather than immediately granting the person a full 90 calendar days, including Saturdays and Sundays, of leave time in any service year. In some cases, the Branch Committee should consider whether it would be better for a person or a couple to terminate special full-time service and inform the branch office when their circumstances have changed. These situations must

be carefully reviewed and handled on a case-by-case basis.—See 5:23.

- During an approved leave of absence, the person's permanent enrollment code will remain the same. While on emergency leave, the person is not expected to meet a monthly hour requirement. If needed, the branch office is authorized to increase a circuit overseer's monthly allowance up to the amount provided to special pioneers during the time that he and his wife, if married, are on an approved leave of absence.

130. Transitional Financial Assistance: At the time that it is determined that an individual will **discontinue special full-time service**, the Branch Committee may see a need to provide the person, depending on his circumstances, with some **transitional financial assistance**. The amount given is not to exceed the equivalent of a special pioneer's allowance per month for a period of up to three months. This arrangement is confidential and is not for the general information of those in special full-time service. It is not expected that the Branch Committee would need to extend this provision to every person departing special full-time service. If the branch office has an arrangement to provide basic health-care support to those in the Worldwide Order, the Branch Committee may feel that it is appropriate to allow the person to continue benefiting from this arrangement as well. **The Branch Committee is authorized to grant up to three months of such transitional financial assistance.** If at the end of the three-month period there is an urgent need for transitional assistance to continue, the Branch Committee may consider approving up to three additional months. In a rare case, when this period has elapsed and it is felt that additional transitional assistance is needed, a recommendation and detailed explanation should be sent to the Service Committee for consideration. A person is not expected to meet an hour requirement

in the ministry in order to receive transitional financial assistance.—See 5:150, 213; 6:4, 106, 119, 125, 127, 143, 155.

Circuit Overseers

131. *Circuit Overseer Guidelines* and the latest correspondence from the Service Committee provide detailed information regarding the activity of circuit overseers.

132. Substitute Circuit Overseers: The qualifications for substitute circuit overseers are outlined in *Circuit Overseer Guidelines*. Generally, substitute circuit overseers are given access to *Circuit Overseer Guidelines* and to the letters addressed to all circuit overseers. Substitute circuit overseers should not be used on a regular basis to care for an entire circuit. Thus, branches will want to have a reasonable number of approved circuit overseers available for use when needed, such as when a circuit overseer will be away for more than three months. Perhaps such brothers could serve as temporary special pioneers while waiting for the next permanent assignment to become available.

133. Circuit overseers may submit recommendations for new substitute circuit overseers using the *Personal Qualifications Report* (S-326). Before a brother is recommended to serve as a substitute circuit overseer or a circuit overseer, he must have attended the Ministerial Training School, the Bible School for Single Brothers, the Bible School for Christian Couples, the School for Kingdom Evangelizers, or the Watchtower Bible School of Gilead. The Service Department should check to see whether he is qualified to serve on special committees and has been recommended as a convention speaker. After the S-326 is evaluated and if everything is positive, the body of elders should be asked to provide its observations and its recommendation of the brother and, if married, his wife, using the S-326 forms. If a positive recommendation is received from both the body of elders and the circuit overseer, the brother may be sent a

Questionnaire for Prospective Substitute Circuit Overseer (S-324).

134. Substitute circuit overseers are appointed by the Branch Committee. The Service Department should submit the completed questionnaire and the S-326 forms from the circuit overseer and the body of elders, as well as any other information that would be helpful to the Branch Committee for its evaluation. If the brother is appointed, a letter should be sent to him informing him of this. A copy of the letter is sent to the circuit overseer with instructions that he provide two weeks of training.

135. *Circuit Overseer Guidelines* outlines how circuit overseers can assist substitute circuit overseers who are not meeting the high standard expected of those serving in this capacity. If a substitute circuit overseer is reprovved or disfellowshipped or is removed as an elder for any other reason, the date of his deletion as a substitute circuit overseer should be entered in Admin. The Service Department may refer complex cases involving a substitute circuit overseer's qualifications to the Branch Committee for consideration.

136. Circuit Overseers: In view of the great trust placed upon circuit overseers, the Branch Committee must give these recommendations very careful and prayerful consideration.—Luke 12:48b.

137. Qualifications: The qualifications for circuit overseers are outlined in *Circuit Overseer Guidelines*. Since the responsibility that is entrusted to circuit overseers of appointing and deleting elders and ministerial servants is a weighty one, those recommended should be kind, impartial, and just. (Ex. 18:21) When handling recommendations, whether for appointment or deletion, the circuit overseer must avoid imposing his personal viewpoints and opinions or setting arbitrary rules. (1 Cor. 4:6) Before being recommended to serve as a circuit overseer, he should have proved that he strives to imitate Jehovah and His Son by caring for matters with love and

patience. (Deut. 10:17; 16:18, 19; Isa. 42:1-4) In this way, he demonstrates deep respect and submission to Jehovah and to the Head of the Christian congregation, Jesus Christ.—Eph. 1:22.

- All brothers recommended as circuit overseers should be graduates of the Watchtower Bible School of Gilead, the School for Kingdom Evangelizers, the Bible School for Christian Couples, or the Bible School for Single Brothers.
- Those being recommended should display evidence of good judgment, spiritual depth, loyalty to God's Word and organization, and soundness of mind. Such qualities are more important than having a compelling, charming personality.
- Those recommended for circuit work should have served as congregation elders for a minimum of three years and have at least two years in full-time service, preferably longer.
- Brothers who are 25 years of age or younger and those 50 years of age or older would usually not be recommended.—See 6:139.
- If the brother is married, his wife should be at least 21 years old, baptized three years or longer, and in full-time service for at least two years.

138. Circuit overseers may submit recommendations of substitute circuit overseers for circuit work, using the S-326 form. After the S-326 is evaluated and if everything is positive, the body of elders should be asked to provide its observations and its recommendation of the brother and, if married, his wife, using the S-326 forms. If a positive recommendation is received from both the body of elders and the circuit overseer, the brother should receive two weeks of training with an experienced circuit overseer. If all is well, he may be sent a *Questionnaire for Prospective Circuit Overseer* (S-323). See *School for Kingdom Evangeliz-*

ers Office Guidelines with regard to providing circuit training to graduates. **Before a recommendation is sent to the Governing Body, the substitute circuit overseer should have served congregations a minimum of ten full weeks.** An exception would be when a brother has previously served in circuit work or is a graduate of the Bible School for Single Brothers, the Bible School for Christian Couples, the School for Kingdom Evangelizers, or the Watchtower Bible School of Gilead and has already received ten weeks of training and may have served only a few weeks as a substitute circuit overseer since then.

139. Appointments: Circuit overseers are appointed by the Governing Body. (See 2:26, 30.) There is no need to supply more information than what is requested on the recommendation form unless there are unusual factors that the Governing Body should know. For example, if the Branch Committee is recommending a brother who is not yet 25 years old or a brother who is 50 years of age or older, the reasons for making such an exceptional recommendation should be fully explained. Because of the rigors of this assignment, it is the Governing Body's preference that brothers under the age of 50 be trained to care for this responsibility. If a brother being recommended previously served as a traveling overseer, the reason for his deletion from that privilege of service should be explained. Once the branch office has received an approved recommendation form from the Governing Body, the Service Department will then send the brother an appointment letter (S-308) along with instructions concerning his new assignment.—See 6:137.

140. Correspondence: Circuit overseers should be kept up-to-date with access to copies of all form letters, such as letters to pioneers, bodies of elders, and so forth. Any of the circuit overseer's personal mail received at the branch office should be forwarded to his current address. At the close of each month, circuit overseers send in a *Monthly Report*

(S-301), which shows their assignments that month, their expenses, their field service report, and dates of personal time away.

141. Size of Circuits: Circuits are generally made up of approximately 16 to 20 congregations, including isolated groups. One factor to take into consideration in determining the number of congregations to be placed in each circuit is the availability, capacity, and distance to the nearest Assembly Hall. In most cases, a circuit overseer should cover his circuit twice annually.

142. Routing: The circuit overseer submits his routing to the branch office three months in advance using the *Circuit Overseer's Route Sheet* (S-300). At the same time, he will send the congregation a *Notice of Visit of Circuit Overseer* (S-302) advising of the dates of his visit. Once the branch office and the congregations have been informed, the circuit overseer should adhere to the routing he submitted. If he feels that a change needs to be made to the routing, he should contact the Service Department and request permission.

143. Death: If a circuit overseer dies, the Service Department should inquire about any expenses incurred for the funeral arrangements. The Service Department can recommend to the Branch Committee that the expenses be covered, giving complete information. Branch Committees may approve the cost of a modest funeral according to local circumstances but should write to the Service Committee for additional approval if the cost will exceed the local approval threshold. The Service Department and Branch Committee should take an active interest in comforting the widow. If the widow has been in the special full-time service for many years, the Service Department can recommend to the Branch Committee that she be appointed as a special pioneer. The Service Department should also assist her with housing and see whether there are any other needs she may have. In the case of

a widow who has not been in the special full-time service for many years, the Service Department may recommend to the Branch Committee that she serve as a regular pioneer and that consideration be given to offering her some transitional financial assistance.—See 6:130.

144. When a circuit overseer loses his wife in death, every effort should be made to comfort him. The Service Department may need to allow him a leave of absence from his assignment. (See 6:146.) If he wishes to continue in the circuit work, the Service Department should monitor matters, bringing any concerns or recommendations to the attention of the Branch Committee.

145. Allowances and PEA Credits: See 5:6-8, 18-21, 23-24.

146. Leave of Absence: Situations that may necessitate granting a circuit overseer or his wife a leave of absence are discussed at 6:129 and in *Circuit Overseer Guidelines*.—See 5:23.

147. Questions About the Qualifications of Circuit Overseers: The branch office should follow up on any concerns or complaints received about a circuit overseer that raise serious questions about his qualifications. First, the office needs to obtain the facts. (Prov. 18:13, 17) In some cases, it may be best to write to the circuit overseer, informing him of what has been reported, and provide him with the opportunity to reply. Serious matters should be referred to the Branch Committee.

148. If what was reported is valid and has raised serious questions about a circuit overseer's qualifications, it may be that a kind letter that outlines the observations and provides loving Scriptural counsel will be sufficient to address the concern. (Prov. 27:9; 1 Tim. 5:1; w99 1/15 pp. 21-24) If needed, the Service Department may ask an experienced circuit overseer or branch representative to discuss the matter privately with the circuit overseer and provide him with appropriate Scriptural counsel during the

next scheduled shepherding visit. (See 6:158) If the matter needs to be handled sooner, an experienced circuit overseer could be asked to care for the matter. When a personal visit is made, the assigned brother should submit a report to the Service Department that includes a summary of the counsel he provided to the circuit overseer. The report should also comment on how the circuit overseer responded to any counsel given. Following the visit by an experienced circuit overseer or by a branch representative, the branch office could follow up in writing to express sincere appreciation for the circuit overseer's efforts in making improvement and to reinforce the counsel given. (1 Thess. 4:1) If this is not the first time that a similar concern has been brought to his attention, the letter from the Service Department could remind the brother of the previous counsel and encourage him to make a more concerted effort to improve. In such cases, the Service Department should copy the Branch Committee on such letters sent to assist the circuit overseer. If, over a reasonable period of time, the circuit overseer does not improve in spite of repeated efforts to assist him, it may be necessary for the Branch Committee to recommend to the Governing Body his deletion as a circuit overseer. A brief summary of the efforts made to assist him should be included in a numbered letter that is sent along with the *Recommendations to Governing Body* form.—See 2:30.

149. On occasion, complaints may be received involving **the wife of a circuit overseer**. Out of respect for the headship principle, the Service Department will write to the husband, informing him of the negative report and asking for his comments. He may be encouraged to help his wife. (The brother assigned to make the next shepherding visit on the circuit overseer and his wife should receive a copy of any correspondence to the circuit overseer so that the brother can offer assistance and counsel if needed.) Appropriate follow-up should be in

harmony with the general principles outlined in the preceding paragraph.

150. When an allegation of serious wrongdoing is made about a circuit overseer, the Service Department should appoint two experienced circuit overseers to investigate. If it is established that there is substance to the report and evidence is available that a serious sin has been committed, the two brothers should notify the Service Department so that a judicial committee can be appointed. If there is insufficient evidence to prove that the allegations are true, the two brothers will make a full report of their findings to the Service Department for evaluation. Although a gross sin may not have been committed, it may be that the circuit overseer's conduct is seriously in question. In such cases, the report should be referred to the Branch Committee for its consideration and direction.—See 2:30.

151. If a circuit overseer confesses to serious wrongdoing, two experienced circuit overseers should be directed by the Service Department to investigate. After confirming the nature and extent of the sin(s) committed, they should report back to the Service Department. The Service Department will appoint a judicial committee consisting of three circuit overseers. Likely, the two who investigated the matter would serve on the committee. The committee's decision, whether reproof or disfellowshipping, is reported to the branch in the normal way. The Service Department would designate a congregation that would hold the records in its confidential file. (It may be the congregation where the former circuit overseer indicates that he will attend meetings.) An announcement of reproof or disfellowshipping would also be made in that congregation. If the former circuit overseer seeks reinstatement, a local congregation judicial committee should hear the plea for reinstatement and seek observations from the branch office before reaching a final decision. If the decision is to reinstate, the appropri-

ate notification should be sent to the Service Department.

152. Age and Health of Circuit Overseers: Circuit overseers will discontinue their assignment on August 31 of the service year that they reach 70 years of age. The brother and his wife, if married, will be transferred to serve as special pioneers.—See 6:111.

153. If a circuit overseer who is not yet 70 years of age is experiencing challenges because of age, chronic health problems, or other circumstances, the Service Department should review the situation. If he is a longtime special full-time servant, an encouraging letter can be sent acknowledging his challenges along with the assurance that he will be assisted with his needs if he transfers from the circuit work. This may move him to request an adjustment in his service. He should be invited to contact the Service Department for direction in making the transfer to serve as a special pioneer. The letter may outline what special pioneers receive by way of financial assistance and health care. If the circuit overseer is not inclined to discontinue, it may be good to address the matter during the next scheduled shepherding visit by an experienced circuit overseer or by a branch representative. If the circuit overseer accedes and decides to discontinue, he should submit his decision in writing. The Branch Committee will review any recommendation from the Service Department regarding a reduced special pioneer hour requirement, his allowance and housing, appointment as a substitute circuit overseer, and so forth. When the Branch Committee approves the recommendation, the Service Department will write the circuit overseer a warm, encouraging letter acknowledging his many years of faithful service, the date that his (and his wife's) special pioneer appointment will become effective, and the arrangements that have been made for him and his wife.—See 2:30; 6:111.

154. In cases where the circuit overseer feels strongly about remaining in the work even though this would prove detrimental to his health, the Service Department should present the matter to the Branch Committee. If it agrees, the Branch Committee should submit its recommendation for deletion to the Governing Body. (See 2:30.) If the Governing Body determines that the circuit overseer should discontinue, the Branch Committee may direct that the Service Department draft a letter for the Branch Committee's review, empathizing with his struggles and informing him of the decision made that is in his best interests and those of the congregations. The letter would provide information about a new assignment and arrangements in place that will help him and his wife in connection with the transition.

155. When a circuit overseer with less than 15 years of special full-time service needs to discontinue his service, perhaps to care for parents or because of a health problem afflicting him or his wife or because of pregnancy, he should notify the Service Department. The Service Department could recommend to the Branch Committee that they be encouraged to serve as regular pioneers and that consideration be given to offering them some transitional financial assistance.—See 6:130.

156. Marriage: If a single circuit overseer becomes engaged to be married and desires to continue in the circuit work, he should inform the Service Department right away. The Service Department will send a questionnaire (S-323) for him and his fiancée to fill out. Additionally, the Service Department will make discreet inquiries, confidentially writing to the body of elders of the sister's congregation and to her circuit overseer about her qualifications. (If the sister is in her fiancé's circuit, another circuit overseer who knows the sister could be contacted.) In addition to their letters, the elders and the circuit overseer should submit separate *Personal*

Qualifications Reports (S-326). These reports, whether favorable or unfavorable, and the questionnaire should be submitted to the Branch Committee with a recommendation. The Branch Committee will review the sister's qualifications, her reputation in the congregation and circuit where she serves, and her physical health and stamina. She should be at least 21 years old, baptized three years or longer, and in full-time service for at least two years. If there is a great difference in age between the two who are planning to marry, the Branch Committee should carefully consider whether this would cause negative talk or be a stumbling block to others. **In all cases in which the circuit overseer has requested to stay on in the circuit work after he gets married, the Branch Committee should submit its comments and recommendation to the Service Committee for its decision.** This should be done well ahead of the wedding date if at all possible. If the Service Committee approves that the circuit overseer continue in the circuit work following his marriage, then his wife would immediately be enrolled as the wife of a circuit overseer and they would start serving congregations right away. The Service Department will write the circuit overseer and inform him of the decision.

157. If it is decided that a longtime circuit overseer should not remain in the circuit work after he gets married, he can be appointed as a special pioneer. However, if the sister he is engaged to marry does not have many years in the special full-time service, she may continue as a regular pioneer. Any exceptional cases should be referred to the Service Committee.

158. Shepherd Visits: Circuit overseers and their wives, if married, should receive a shepherding visit at least once every two years. Such visits should be made during a circuit overseer's regular visit to a congregation, not during the week of a circuit assembly. In larger branches, most circuit overseers will receive a visit from another

experienced circuit overseer. The experienced circuit overseer in turn will receive a shepherding visit from a branch representative. In smaller branches, branch representatives may visit all the circuit overseers. The Branch Committee is responsible for selecting the brothers who will be used to make such shepherding visits. As soon as the branch representative or the experienced circuit overseer is provided with the names of the circuit overseers he is to visit, he should contact those brothers to determine the best time for the visit.—See 6:148.

159. Circuit overseers assigned to shepherd other circuit overseers should be men who are older in years and experienced as traveling overseers. They should be known as ones who maintain a good personal schedule of Bible study and meditation and who keep up-to-date with published information from 'the faithful slave' and with letters from the branch office. (Matt. 24:45) They should be balanced in judgment, show genuine humility, have a sincere interest in helping others, and have a high regard for the importance of the discipling work. (Phil. 4:5; Jas. 3:17; 1 Pet. 5:5) It is especially important that they be men who are compassionate and who are able to be encouraging and helpful to others.—Isa. 32:1, 2; Col. 3:12.

160. Branch representatives assigned to shepherd circuit overseers may be members of the Branch Committee, experienced Service Department deskmen, or responsible brothers in the branch office who have had experience in the traveling work. Each branch representative would normally make no more than one or two such visits per year.

161. Writing Letters to Former Traveling Overseers: In many countries, there are faithful brothers who formerly spent many years in the traveling work. To encourage such older brothers, branch offices may write a personalized letter from time to time. This shows that the organization is interested in their welfare and appreciates what they ac-

completed in the traveling work during a big part of their life.—Phil. 2:4; 1 Pet. 5:12.

Other Desks in the Service Department

162. Convention Desk: In larger branch offices, a Convention Desk is assigned to ensure that practical and beneficial arrangements are made for holding conventions. Helpful guidance is found in *Convention Organization Guidelines* (CO-1). The desk maintains all files pertaining to regional conventions, including speaker ratings (S-306), convention volunteer reports (CO-53), and so forth.

163. Kingdom Halls and Assembly Halls: A brother in the Service Department should be designated as the contact for the Local Design/Construction Department (LDC). His responsibility will be to determine where Kingdom Halls and Assembly Halls are needed. He will work closely with the LDC to develop a master plan of the number of Kingdom Halls and Assembly Halls that are needed and their priority. The master plan is submitted for approval to the Branch Committee. Once approved, the LDC will use this plan to prioritize and administer construction, renovation, and maintenance projects for Kingdom Halls and Assembly Halls in the branch territory. The brother in the Service Department will work closely with the LDC to review and study regularly the needs for Kingdom Halls and Assembly Halls in order to update the master plan.—See 5:172.

164. Speaking Assignment Desk: The Teaching Committee provides letters and direction that outline the arrangements for Bethel speakers. These guidelines should be followed regarding assignments, expenses, and so forth.—See 7:71-80.

165. Territory Desk: Territory maps should be prepared using the best map available in the country. Indicate on the state or province maps the territory assigned to each congregation and the

boundaries of all circuits. Unassigned territory should also be indicated on this map or on a separate map. The names of circuit overseers followed by the circuit numbers may be placed within the boundary of the area they serve. A territory assignment letter (S-54) is sent to each congregation with the exact written description of the outlined territory. It may also be possible to send a map clearly outlining the congregation's assigned territory. The procedure for congregations to follow in adjusting territory boundaries is outlined on the form *Territory Adjustment Request* (S-6).

166. Theocratic Schools Desk: This desk cares for the various theocratic schools, such as the Pioneer Service School, the School for Kingdom Evangelizers, the Kingdom Ministry School, the School for Congregation Elders, and language seminars.

167. Circuit Overseer Desk: In larger branch offices, a desk may be designated to care for circuit overseers and their needs in harmony with organizational guidelines. The desk assists with the identification, training, and recommendations for appointment of substitute circuit overseers and regular circuit overseers.

Service Reports

168. Monthly Field Service Report: Branch offices should follow the instructions provided in Admin for compiling and sending the *Field Service Report* (S-81) to the Service Committee. The figures for the S-81 are taken from a careful compilation of the *Congregation Reports* (S-1), *Special Pioneer Reports* (S-212), *Home Reports* (A-24), and circuit overseers' *Monthly Reports* (S-301). All publishers are encouraged to report through a congregation. Isolated publishers and pioneers send their reports on the publisher's *Field Service Report* (S-4), indicating that it is from an "isolated publisher" or "isolated pioneer." The figure for the "Public by Mail" column on the S-81 can be obtained from the month-to-month record of books, brochures,

and magazines sent from the branch to the non-Witness public. In addition, all magazines or literature sent out in response to coupons are listed as "Public by Mail." Comments about new peaks in publishers, general highlights of the work, or trends may be submitted in the "Remarks" column. Questions or significant figures should be sent to the Service Committee in a separate letter.—See 6:68.

169. A separate *Field Service Report* (S-81) should be submitted monthly for each political entity under the oversight of the branch. Reports should be sent no later than the 28th of the following month. Late or missing reports may be included in the report for the following month. Be sure that any peaks shown do not include reports in excess of the total number of congregations for that month.

170. Annual Field Service Report: Branch offices should follow the instructions provided in Admin for compiling and sending the end-of-year figures.

Files and Filing

171. Since the files in the office are used by many to do their work, **all correspondence must be promptly and correctly filed** so that it can be readily located. As a general guideline, items should be filed within one week of their being completed. The secretary has the responsibility for this and should have a regular routine for filing.

172. Permanent congregation files are stored in a very secure, locked area of the branch. Each congregation file has four sections: (1) circuit overseers' reports, (2) general correspondence, (3) reinstatements, and (4) disfellowshippings and disassociations. [See Chart 6.1.]

173. Circuit Overseers' Reports: S-303 and S-2 forms and supplemental letters are kept in the front of the file in date order with the most recent at the front. When a new report is received, a red mark is made on the upper right

corner of the preceding report, and the new report is inserted in front of it. If the first report in the file has this red mark, then the most recent report has been removed.

174. General Correspondence: This material is filed directly behind the circuit overseers' reports in date order with the most recent at the front of the general correspondence. The *Congregation Application* (S-51), or in its absence the oldest *Report on Circuit Overseer's Visit With Congregation* (S-303), is filed at the back of the general correspondence. If the last circuit overseer's report prior to the elder arrangement in 1972 is available, it should be stamped "DO NOT DESTROY" and retained just in front of the S-51 form. Correspondence regarding an individual accused of child abuse should be marked "DO NOT DESTROY."

175. Reinstatements: Whether recorded on S-77 forms or in letters from judicial committees, correspondence related to reinstatements is filed directly behind the general correspondence and S-51 form in the date order of reinstatement, with the most recent reinstatement in the front of this section. The S-77 form and attached correspondence about those reinstated are kept at least five years. The S-77 form may be marked "DO NOT DESTROY" by the Service Desk if the material should be kept longer.

176. Disfellowshippings and Disassociations: These are kept at the back of the file. The most recent disfellowshipping record is filed at the very back of the folder. When an individual is reinstated, the date of reinstatement is recorded on the S-77 form, which is then filed with the reinstatements, as noted above.

177. Hold File: Each Service Desk maintains a HOLD FILE for pending items. This file typically contains correspondence on matters for which the deskman has requested further information or comments from circuit overseers or elders. It may be best also to keep in

the hold file a complete copy of any material routed to Service Department oversight or to the Branch Committee. Every month the secretary should go through the hold file, checking to see whether a response has been made. If the office has not received the requested information or comments within three months, he should check with the deskman to see whether a reminder letter should be sent. When sending a reminder letter to a body of elders, a courtesy copy is provided to the circuit overseer with a blind PS asking him to make certain that the elders respond promptly.

178. Files for Isolated Pioneers and Publishers:

When it is not feasible for an isolated group of publishers to be cared for by a congregation, a file folder for each isolated publisher group that cannot yet be formed into a congregation is made and arranged alphabetically according to the name of the place where the publisher receiving mail for the group resides. All correspondence to and from the group, as well as reports from the circuit overseer for his visits to the group, is placed in this file. When a group is established as a congregation, the contents of the folder are added to the CONGREGATION FILE. A file folder is also made for ISOLATED PIONEERS. The S-4 forms from isolated pioneers are kept for a year in this folder. These files are kept together and not with the congregation files.

179. Circuit Files: The S-2 forms showing the appointment of assembly overseers and assistant assembly overseers are kept in these files.—See 6:52.

180. Branch Correspondence Files:

When other branches send correspondence to your branch for forwarding to individuals in the field, they usually include a courtesy copy for your branch file. Such copies are filed in the appropriate folder of the BRANCH CORRESPONDENCE FILES, not in the congregation files. If much mail is received from other branches, it may be helpful to sort the mail into categories, such

as Branch Accommodations, Donation Letters, Kingdom Hall Information Requests, and Miscellaneous. The respective retention policy should be followed for each category.

181. Special Pioneer Files: A file folder is made for each special pioneer or, if married, for each couple. The files are arranged alphabetically. The special pioneer's current congregation assignment, his *Application for Regular Pioneer Service* (S-205), and the S-208 are a permanent part of the file. Also filed here are the two most recent S-326 forms submitted by the circuit overseer and the file copy of the personal annual encouragement letter sent by the Service Desk. (The personal encouragement letter is sent after the receipt of the first S-326 form each service year.) General correspondence may be disposed of when the files are weeded according to the branch's document retention policy.—See 6:115, 186.

182. Active and Inactive Circuit Overseer Files:

An *active* file folder is made for each circuit overseer by the secretary. This folder contains correspondence from the circuit overseer pertaining to his circuit as a whole, including any S-326 forms that were submitted on the circuit overseer and his wife, the file copies of correspondence written to the circuit overseer in connection with these reports, and correspondence regarding his field activity or his personal affairs. When a circuit overseer discontinues the circuit work, the folder is placed in the *inactive* file.

183. Active and Inactive Substitute Circuit Overseer Files:

An *active* file folder is made for each substitute circuit overseer. This folder contains the correspondence regarding his appointment, including the S-324, any S-326 forms, and so forth. When a substitute circuit overseer discontinues the circuit work, the folder is placed in the *inactive* file.

184. "Declaration Pledging Faithfulness" Files:

If used, a "Declaration Pledging Faithfulness" is filed by the last name of the person on the declaration. A

separate list of names of those in the file should be maintained.—See *Correspondence Guidelines*, pp. 73-74.

185. Files for Those Disfellowshipped and Disassociated: A permanent file of those disfellowshipped and disassociated is kept. If S-79a/b cards are used by the branch office, they are filed alphabetically by last name, first name, and middle name and should be stored in a very secure, locked room.

186. Weeding Section Files: Deskmen are responsible for weeding the congregation files for their section. Not to be weeded are any S-2 or S-52 forms. These are to be kept indefinitely in the congregation file. Any correspondence dealing with the transfer of appointed brothers from one congregation to another should also be kept indefinitely. At least the last five copies of the S-303 forms and supplemental letters are kept. Older S-303 forms marked "DO NOT DESTROY" are also kept. The schedule for file retention is to be followed. A secretary may weed the files if directed to do so by the deskman. However, the deskman must carefully check the items slated for shredding within a short time of their being weeded by the secretary so that nothing of significance is discarded. The secretary should not shred anything from the files without getting the approval of the deskman.—See 6:181.

187. Electronic Files: The work of the Service Department should be maintained on a computer network system, which is backed up regularly. Admin supports scanning documents into the Correspondence and Workflow modules. However, before undertaking a project to scan large volumes of historical documents, please first consult with the WHQ Computer Department. Once hard copy paperwork has been scanned and verified, then it can be shredded. Electronic files not stored in Admin should be labeled and kept in the following structure. In the work folder, a subfolder should be designated for the YEAR (2010, 2011, and so on) and a sub-

subfolder for each MONTH (January, February, and so on). Each file should be labeled with the year, month, day, desk symbols, state or province abbreviation, city name, congregation number, and name of individual or brief description of the matter. For example: 2009-02-16-SASSA_NY_Pawling_12345_John_Publisher.docx and 2009-02-16-SFS_SF_CA_Los_Angeles_West_98765_BOE_Korean_Group.docx.

WATCHTOWER BIBLE SCHOOL OF GILEAD

188. Purpose of the School: The purpose of this 20-week school is to provide intensive training in Bible study and theocratic organization for experienced and well-qualified special full-time servants who have already proved that they are mature Christians. With this additional training, these individuals should be able to do more to stabilize and strengthen the field and branch organization.

189. Basic Requirements:

- Married couples, single brothers, and single sisters between the ages of 25 and 50 who have been in special full-time service for at least three consecutive years.
- Candidates must have the potential for strengthening and stabilizing the field or branch organization to a greater degree and must have demonstrated that they enjoy serving their brothers and can help others in a kind way to learn and adhere to Scriptural and theocratic direction.
- They must be exemplary in all aspects of Christian living.
- Married couples must have served the last three years together in special full-time service.
- A brother must be an elder who has been serving for a minimum of two consecutive years.
- Must be able to read, write, and speak English fluently.

- Must be in good health. Those who have chronic ailments, who have physical or emotional disorders, who require regular visits to a doctor or a chiropractor, who suffer from severe allergies, or who require a special diet should not be recommended for Gilead training.
- Neither past graduates of Gilead nor current members of a Branch or Country committee should be recommended.
- Circuit overseers must have already attended the School for Circuit Overseers and Their Wives.

190. Selecting Candidates: When considering candidates to be recommended for Gilead School training, the Branch Committee should have clearly in mind the current and long-term needs at Bethel and in the field. (See 6:101.) The following points should be considered:

- In reviewing a candidate's strengths and limitations, spiritual qualities such as humility and submission to theocratic instruction are more important than a person's age, seniority, nationality, or secular education.—1 Sam. 16:6, 7; Acts 16:2; Jas. 3:17; 1 Pet. 3:4.
- It is the Governing Body's preference that brothers who are being considered for appointment to the Branch or Country committee attend Gilead School.
- Which special full-time servants would readily apply themselves to the intensive training at Gilead and, as a result, be spiritually strengthened so as to be of *greater use* to the organization?—Phil. 2:20-22; 1 Tim. 4:15.
- With Gilead training, which brothers would serve as effective and discerning overseers in key Bethel departments, as deskmen in the Service Department, as field instructors, or as circuit overseers?

- Since the spirituality of translators is critical to the production of high-quality spiritual food, which translators would benefit the most from an in-depth study of the Bible and organizational matters at Gilead?
- In the field, which special full-time servants have proved themselves to be outstanding evangelizers, maintaining their joy despite challenging circumstances?
- Among the single sisters, which ones are excellent teachers in the field, balanced, modest, respectful of authority, sound in mind, and able to get along well with all types of personalities?
- In lands where the Kingdom work is well-established and where there are many spiritually mature brothers and sisters, the Branch Committee should give consideration to recommending those who could fill needs in *other* lands after Gilead training.

191. Processing Questionnaires:

Gilead recommendations are to be submitted to the Service Committee each year during the month of December. In December, each branch should submit recommendations for four married couples and four single persons. If a person indicates on the questionnaire that he does not have the circumstances to be sent to another country, he may still be recommended for Gilead training if the Branch Committee firmly believes that the person will make a major contribution to the Kingdom work locally.

192. Qualified candidates being considered should be provided with (1) a copy of the *Questionnaire to Attend the Watchtower Bible School of Gilead* (G-12), (2) a copy of the G-16 cover letter, and (3) the A-63 letter. To ensure that the Branch Committee has a complete picture of the strengths and limitations of those being considered, a *Personal Qualifications Report* (S-326) should be obtained from the candidate's local body of elders and

circuit overseer. If the candidate is serving at Bethel, a report should also be obtained from his department overseer and elder group. Before the Branch Committee reviews the completed G-12 questionnaires, it should confirm that each question has been answered correctly and completely. The Branch Committee should review the G-12 questionnaires and other reports very carefully before making final selections. Each recommendation should be sent electronically to the Service Committee with a very brief covering numbered letter that includes the following attachments:

- *Gilead Student Recommendations* (G-7) form. The branch should provide specific comments on each candidate's qualifications and future potential and how the person would be used after Gilead. Gilead recommendations are valid until the following December.
- *Questionnaire to Attend the Watchtower Bible School of Gilead* (G-12). In addition to this completed questionnaire, a quality full-length color photo should be included as an electronic file or scanned document.

BRANCH VISITS

193. Branch Visits: The Service Committee assigns headquarters representatives to make branch visits. Such visits are usually arranged each year. The headquarters representative's primary work is to encourage the Bethel family, to aid the members of the Branch Committee in caring for their assignments, and to see that matters are being conducted in accord with the Scriptures and in harmony with direction from the Governing Body. (Acts 16:4, 5; Rom. 1:11, 12; Phil. 1:8-11) During his visit to the Bethel departments, the headquarters representative makes himself available to the members of the Bethel family who wish to speak about their service or personal matters. To get a firsthand report of the progress of the Kingdom work in

the field, the headquarters representative will meet with some of the circuit overseers. During the visit, he will also arrange to meet with all of the field missionaries. Following his review of branch operations, the brother will provide a brief report to the Branch Committee, outlining points of commendation. As needed, the headquarters representative will also report on any significant matters that he feels may be adversely affecting the progress of the preaching and disciple-making work as well as the smooth operation of the work at the branch.—1 Cor. 14:40.

194. The Branch Committee should prepare well for the branch visit in harmony with direction received from the Service Committee. (See 7:67-70.) Prior to the headquarters representative's arrival, the Branch Committee should already have completed the *Branch Visit Questionnaire* (A-26) for the current service year. At the end of his visit, the headquarters representative will provide his additional comments on the form and give to the Branch Committee a letter providing his observations, commendation, and counsel, if needed. The A-26 questionnaire, as well as his letter to the Branch Committee, is then sent to the Service Committee, which in turn will send each respective section of the report to the appropriate Governing Body committee. The Governing Body committees will not send routine acknowledgments of the report. If a matter is raised that requires specific direction from world headquarters, the Branch Committee should write further about it to the appropriate Governing Body committee.

195. Shepherding Visits: Governing Body members are assigned to make two shepherding visits per year to selected branches for the encouragement of the Branch Committees and Bethel families. (1 Pet. 5:2, 3) Such visits are about one week in length. Usually, a shepherding visit and the annual branch visit will be scheduled some months apart from each other. The shepherding visit will require

less preparation than a typical branch visit. For example, field missionaries and Bethelites serving in remote offices are not invited to the branch office during the shepherding visit. In addition, prior to the visit, there will be no need for the Branch Committee to complete a *Branch Visit Questionnaire* (A-26). A copy of the latest *Branch Visit Questionnaire* (A-26) should be made available to the Governing Body member on his arrival. There is no need for the branch office to arrange an extensive schedule of visits to Bethel departments. Rather, at the time of the

arrival of the Governing Body member, he will inform the Branch Committee of how he will carry out the visit.

196. A feature of the shepherding visit is a special program for congregations. If possible, the special program should be streamed to locations throughout the branch territory. In years when both a branch visit and a shepherding visit are scheduled, the special program held during the branch visit will be kept smaller, perhaps being held at a nearby Assembly Hall. That program will not be streamed to other locations.

CONFIDENTIAL

CHART 6.1**ORGANIZATION OF PERMANENT CONGREGATION FILES****(4) DISFELLOWSHIPPINGS AND DISASSOCIATIONS**

S-77 and disfellowshipping reports (Most recent at back of file)

(3) REINSTATEMENTS (Most recent in front)**(2) GENERAL CORRESPONDENCE (Most recent in front)**

S-51 OR OLDEST S-303 AND LAST S-303 PRIOR TO
ELDER ARRANGEMENT (Behind the correspondence)

(1) CIRCUIT OVERSEERS' REPORTS

(Most recent in front; red mark in upper right corner on all but most recent)

CHAPTER 7

TEACHING COMMITTEE

1. The Teaching Committee's focus is on providing instruction that highlights the practical value of the fine spiritual food that we receive from "the faithful and discreet slave." (Matt. 24:45; 1 Tim. 4:16) This committee's general scope of operation is summarized at the end of this chapter. [See Chart 7.1.]

CIRCUIT ASSEMBLIES

2. **Circuit assembly** programs and outlines are provided yearly by the Teaching Committee. These events are to be conducted in accord with *Circuit Organization Guidelines* (S-330). Taking into account the recommendations of the circuit overseers, the Branch Committee will arrange to hold two one-day circuit assemblies a year for each circuit or section of a circuit. Normally, a visiting speaker will be sent from the branch to serve one of the events (*CA-br*). A circuit overseer will handle the main talk(s) for the other assembly (*CA-co*). Where practical, the Branch Committee may assign visiting speakers from the branch to serve circuit assemblies in other countries under its oversight, following the guidelines given in 7:9-10. Only circuit overseers or regular members of the Bethel family (BBR) who are currently appointed as visiting speakers at circuit assemblies may be used for these assignments. (See 7:73 for guidelines on these appointments.)

3. If it is felt that the published *CA-br* program should be adjusted for a certain locality, a proposal should be sent to the Teaching Committee for approval. In countries with only one circuit or where publishers are very poor and cannot afford to travel to three events in a year, the Branch Committee could consider any of the following optional arrangements: (1) obtaining a DVD of an

earlier *CA-br* program in the language of the circuit for showing at the Kingdom Hall(s) where the affected publishers meet, (2) merging the two yearly events for the affected circuit into one weekend, or (3) not holding the *CA-br* program. In countries where restrictions make it impossible to hold regional conventions or circuit assemblies, arrangements may be made to present abbreviated programs in Kingdom Halls or at other appropriate locations.

4. **Foreign-language circuit assemblies** are organized when at least 200 attendees can convene in that language and if there are enough qualified speakers to hold the program. If the Branch Committee feels that an exception is needed, a request may be sent to the Teaching Committee.

5. For the benefit of smaller foreign-language congregations and groups, assemblies may be interpreted simultaneously. When a foreign-language session has been approved, the circuit overseer assigns qualified speakers to present selected parts, such as the baptism talk and the *Watchtower* Study summary, in the foreign language of the audience. This session is held concurrently with the program in the primary language of the event. Depending on the availability of interpreters, other parts can be interpreted simultaneously for the benefit of the foreign-language audience. (Branches without enough fluent speakers in a particular foreign-language field may request a branch where assemblies and conventions are held in that language to provide DVDs of a video file of such events. If a branch can provide such a recording, it should display only what transpires on stage. Footage of the audience

or other areas of the venue should not be shown. Moreover, while reasonably good video is desired, high-quality audio is of foremost importance.) Portions of the recorded program may be shown interspersed with live presentations by the available speakers or interpreters. These sessions are usually held in a separate room or area of the venue and are organized so that they will not distract the audience attending the main program. (Where possible, an FM transmitter and small FM receivers with earphones may be used. The circuit may have to purchase the FM transmitter.) If a circuit overseer for a foreign-language field feels that enough qualified speakers and interpreters are available, he should recommend to the branch office that sessions be held in that language. This request should be sent well in advance of the scheduled event. In his report he should answer the following questions: How many publishers and interested persons would benefit from this program? How many elders and ministerial servants qualify to give talks or interpret the program? How many parts could the appointed brothers realistically present? How many other publishers qualify to interpret the program? —See 7:15.

6. If simultaneous interpretation is approved for circuit events, a qualified brother should oversee the arrangement, under the direction of the assembly overseer. If possible, the brother selected should know the foreign language. The circuit overseer should meet with this brother to decide on such matters as a practical location for the foreign-language session, lighting, and sound.

7. Interpreters should be exemplary publishers approved by the Congregation Service Committee to assist in this way. Accurate knowledge of the truth of God's Word is required in order to interpret Scriptural thoughts correctly into another language. It is essential that an interpreter have a good compre-

hension of both languages, particularly of the target language.—See 7:53, 70.

8. The brother overseeing the interpretation should schedule the assignments well in advance. If at all possible, qualified brothers, rather than sisters, should be used for the principal talks, particularly those of the circuit overseer or the visiting speaker from the branch. When qualified sisters must be used, they should be referred to the published direction given on this matter. (w09 11/15 pp. 12-13) A copy of the talk outline may be given in advance to the assigned interpreter, who will use it for preparation purposes only. In addition, the speaker may be able to give the interpreter a copy of his personal notes prior to the presentation. Either way, those copies are only to be used by the interpreter to prepare for his assignment. Neither one of the copies nor a translation thereof should be used by the interpreter during the actual presentation of the talk. Rather, he should listen carefully to the speaker's delivery and convey to the audience in his own words an accurate interpretation of the speaker's statements. (See *be* p. 55.) Any copies of the talk outline or the speaker's notes given to the interpreter beforehand should be returned to the speaker or destroyed after the program. Before the actual delivery of the talk, the speaker would do well to meet with the assigned interpreter to discuss pertinent details of his presentation. This guideline may be followed for all interpreted events. If a Governing Body member or a helper to a Governing Body committee is present and he is comfortable with the arrangement, his prayer may be interpreted, either consecutively or simultaneously. In all other cases, the prayer should be said by a brother fluent in the target language. However, if the brother speaks another language that most in the audience also understand, he could give the prayer using that common language. —See 7:15, 53.

9. Travel Expenses Associated With Circuit Assembly (CA-br) Assignments:

The circuit should cover the transportation expenses of the visiting speaker and his wife (if married) even if he uses a branch vehicle to travel to his assignment. The branch is authorized to fund or supplement any financial shortfall for circuits unable to cover these travel expenses. In any case, a visiting Bethel representative should be assigned every year. Even if the branch must initially cover the travel expenses of the visiting speaker and his wife (if married), the insolvent circuit might still be able to contribute "something" to assist. (1 Cor. 16:1, 2) As a possible option, Branch or Country committee members could serve such circuits in conjunction with their annual visits to nearby missionaries or remote translation offices.—See 7:2.

10. Time Away for Circuit Assembly (CA-br) Assignments:

Generally, Bethel speakers would need no more than a total of two days to travel to and from most circuit assembly (CA-br) assignments. (For these assignments, wives would be granted the same amount of time away from work as their husbands.) Those closer to Bethel may require little or no time away. In some branches overseeing vast territories that span many time zones or in lands where travel is very difficult, more than a day's time might be needed for a speaker to reach his assignment. In such rare cases, the visiting speaker should make a reasonable determination of the amount of travel time needed, considering such local circumstances as the reliability of the transportation, the schedules, and the travel costs. (See 7:2.) Occasionally, a brother from Bethel might be assigned to serve a circuit assembly (CA-br) in a remote area if he will be able to reach the assembly either en route to or returning from another distant assignment, such as a visit to a remote translation office. Also, if a brother will be taking personal time away in a distant part of the

branch territory, some thought might be given to having him care for a circuit assembly (CA-br) being held in the vicinity.

11. If the circuit assembly (CA-br) is scheduled on Sunday and reaching the site will require a significant amount of travel time, the brother would usually travel on Saturday as long as suitable transportation is available and travel costs would not be much higher than on Friday. Typically, he would travel back to Bethel on Monday. When the event is scheduled on Saturday, the speaker would normally leave from Bethel on Friday so as to reach his accommodations for that evening at a reasonable time. Likely, he will return to Bethel on Sunday, providing circumstances allow for a reasonable itinerary that day. If it is normally possible to keep to the aforementioned travel schedule but a speaker opts to leave earlier or return later, he is expected to use personal time away from Bethel.

12. If the above guidelines do not answer questions that could arise regarding this subject, the Branch Committee should feel free to contact the Teaching Committee, explaining what is involved in a particular situation.—See 6:82.

CONVENTIONS

13. In its annual letter to all branches, the Governing Body sets out the program for the coming year, including information about future conventions and general arrangements for holding regional, national, international, or special conventions. Special conventions are held every year unless international conventions have been scheduled for that year. They take place in smaller venues that hold from 7,000 to 12,000 attendees, including about 1,500 foreign delegates (1,000 from the United States and 500 from nearby lands.) Branch-planned activities also take place before and/or after the convention. International conventions are held every four or five years. They take place in larger

venues that hold a minimum of 20,000 attendees, including about 3,000 foreign delegates (2,000 from the United States and 1,000 from other countries around the globe). Branch-planned activities also take place before and/or after the convention. An arrangement is made for those in foreign service to be funded to attend the convention of their choice. For more information on how these events should be conducted, please see *Convention Organization Guidelines* (CO-1). Also, when international or special conventions are held, please note that a special provision of time away is made for special full-time servants who are **selected as delegates**. (This is separate and in addition to the usual personal time away or hour credits that are granted to attend one annual regional convention. The two provisions of time away are different and cannot be combined to attend only one event.) The special provision of time away is as follows: Bethel family members and circuit overseers and their wives who are selected as delegates to attend a special or an international convention will be granted one and a half days of personal time away in order to attend all program sessions at one such event. This provision also applies to field instructors and their wives, Assembly Hall servants, and construction servants who are selected as delegates. As for special pioneers, temporary special pioneers, and field missionaries who are selected as delegates to a special or an international convention, they will receive a five-hour credit for each day of the special or international convention.

14. Programs: Convention programs address concerns from Branch Committees regarding specific needs in their part of the field. If a Branch Committee desires to adjust a program because of local needs, it should write the Teaching Committee for direction before proceeding. An abbreviated regional convention program is sent to all branches, as this may be helpful to smaller language groups and territories.

15. Conventions and assemblies should be practical and in good taste and should prove to be a spiritual blessing to those in attendance. These events should be held at a time of year when the majority of the brothers will be able to attend. If the Branch Committee approves simultaneous interpretation into a foreign language for some or all of the parts of the program, a qualified brother should oversee that arrangement. He should work under the oversight of the convention chairman. As with circuit events (see 7:5), if a circuit overseer for a foreign-language field feels that a sufficient number of qualified speakers are available, he may recommend to the branch office that a foreign-language session be held in conjunction with a regional convention in that area. This request should be sent by mid-January, at least one year in advance of the scheduled event. He should inform the branch how many publishers and interested persons would benefit from this arrangement, how many qualified brothers would be available to give talks, and how many parts each of them could handle. (If there are enough publishers, consideration might also be given to presenting the drama at the foreign-language session.) This arrangement would require a program overseer for the foreign-language session who would work under the direction of the Convention Committee. Therefore, the circuit overseer should recommend a qualified brother for this responsibility. Based on the ratings received from the field, the branch office will assign the speakers for all foreign-language sessions. The program overseer appointed to serve the foreign-language sessions will oversee the functioning of the sessions. If approval is given to hold a foreign-language session concurrent with a regional convention program on the same premises where a member of the Governing Body, a helper to a Governing Body committee, or a Branch Committee member is assigned to share on the program in the primary language, such talks should be simul-

taneously interpreted for the benefit of the foreign-language session. If qualified interpreters are not available, those talks will be assigned to local brothers and presented in the foreign language of the session.—See 7:8.

16. Location of Conventions: When national, international, or special conventions are arranged, one of the larger cities in the country should be selected. Regional conventions should be held in cities that can accommodate the anticipated attendance. For the sake of the witness that will be given, it is best to hold conventions in as many different large cities as possible and practical.

17. Expenses: The branch will cover the expenses involved in holding conventions in its territory and will accept contributions from those in attendance. Well-organized conventions are a real stimulus to the brothers and an encouragement to interested people. If the convention runs smoothly because of good organization and loving oversight, the brothers will generally support it well. It is appropriate to remind the brothers that it is a privilege to support the convention and the worldwide work monetarily.—Luke 16:9-13; 2 Cor., chaps. 8-9.

18. Attendees are encouraged to bring their own food and beverages. If because of local circumstances a branch finds it necessary to provide some basic food items or a beverage at regional conventions or circuit events, a request should be sent to the Teaching Committee clearly explaining why this is needed and how the expenses will be covered. The Teaching and Publishing committees will consider the request.

19. Releasing Newly Translated Publications: When an approved translation is completed on a publication that was not released simultaneously with the English edition, the Branch Committee will need to determine how best to release the item. If the

publication will not be available when regional conventions are held, it may be released by means of a general letter to the congregations or with a brief announcement in *Our Kingdom Ministry*. There is no provision for releasing a newly translated publication at a circuit assembly or a special meeting held in connection with a branch visit.

20. If a newly translated publication will be available before the regional convention, the Branch Committee may write the Teaching Committee, recommending that the item be released at that time. This should be recommended only for new publications in the primary language(s) of the branch territory. Along with their recommendation, the Branch Committee would need to supply the title and language of the publication, the proposed ratio of distribution at the regional convention, and at what point during the program they recommend making the announcement. For some items, such as songbooks, the release announcement would likely be made early in the program so that the brothers could begin using them right away. Most often, however, it would be more practical to announce such releases during the final talk of the convention.

21. If it is known that a newly translated publication will be ready for distribution shortly after the local regional conventions, a release announcement could be made during the final talk on the program, stating when the item will be available for request through the congregations. The wording for such brief announcements may follow the pattern used on past convention talk outlines or manuscripts.

22. If regional conventions of the same language will be held in various countries, the release announcement for a new edition of the *New World Translation* should be made first at a regional convention in the country overseeing that language. However, for any

other translated publication, its release may be announced at the first convention of the season, regardless of the country, as long as the item is available in the language of the convention. (See 7:19-21.) Good communication and cooperation between the branches involved is encouraged. If you desire to have a member of the Governing Body release the Bible, please write and make this request. You should answer the following questions: (1) What is the estimated timetable for printing and shipping? (2) What are the scheduled dates for the first regional convention in that language? (3) In what city will the event be held, and what will be the venue? (4) What is the estimated attendance figure? (5) Will other locations be tied in with the main venue for the talks of the Governing Body member? (6) Will you be able to tie in other regional conventions? (7) What transportation arrangements would need to be made to get to the convention city? Is travel safe? (8) Where will the Governing Body member be accommodated? (9) Are you aware of any local regulations that would impede the participation of a member of the Governing Body on the program? (10) If so, do you foresee the possibility of requesting an exemption from the local authorities? Please note that if the Bible is ready for release at a time other than your convention season, a special program similar to what was organized for the release of the revised English edition may be organized. Such an event may be scheduled as soon as printed copies of the new Bible are available for distribution. In this way, a branch would have two options: (1) Release a revised edition in conjunction with a regional convention whenever that is practical or (2) hold a special event. When a special event is arranged, a large venue may be rented from which the program will originate. The program may be video streamed to Assembly Halls and Kingdom Halls within the branch territory so that as many publishers as possible can benefit. If the language of

the release is also the primary language of a country outside the branch territory where the program is being held, arrangements can be made for Assembly Halls and Kingdom Halls in those areas to be tied in as well. The video stream could be delayed as needed for the benefit of locations in different time zones. In this way, many publishers fluent in the language of the release will hear the news simultaneously instead of over a period of months. The program could start at 9:30 a.m. or 10:00 a.m. and last for about three hours, but it might run a bit longer if the talks by a visiting Governing Body member require interpretation. The program will have the following format:

- 10 min: Opening song and prayer. The chairman follows with a warm welcome to the audience and a few encouraging comments.
- 30 min: *Watchtower* Study summary. (To be included when the event is held on a Sunday or when a program held on Saturday will need to be video streamed also on Sunday and regular congregation meetings will not be held that weekend.)
- 15 min: As an optional feature, the 15-minute video presentation entitled *A Precious Gift From God*, about the *New World Translation of the Holy Scriptures*, could be included as it was when the revised English edition was released. Of course, this would need to be translated in advance.
- 10 min: Group interview of two or three local publishers who remember the original release of the *New World Translation* in the local language.
- 25 min: Release talk by the visiting Governing Body member.
- 5 min: Song.
- 10 min: After inviting the audience to be reseated, the chairman announces that the new Bible will be distributed at this time.
- 15 min: Talk by a Branch Committee member, based on an outline provided by the Teaching Committee.
- 15 min: Talk by a Branch Committee member, based on an outline provided by the Teaching Committee.

40 min: Talk by the visiting Governing Body member on a topic of his choice.

5 min: Brief closing comments by the chairman, followed by song and prayer.

23. Convention Committee: The branch office should appoint a Convention Committee made up of the Convention Committee coordinator, the program overseer, and the rooming overseer. These elders should be good organizers and have the time available to care for the assignment. A circuit overseer may be assigned if necessary. It is essential that these brothers be spiritual men who fully manifest the fruitage of the spirit, even under pressure. The Convention Committee should be alert, capable of dealing with officials and other business concerns. In addition to providing oversight to the overall convention operation, the Convention Committee assigns all other department heads.

24. The committee members should be well-respected by the publishers and exhibit good teaching ability. If a brother appointed to a Convention Committee is rated as an average speaker, he should be used on the program in harmony with his speaking ability. If a brother is recommended to serve on a Convention Committee because of outstanding spiritual and organizational qualifications but is not recommended to give a talk on the program because of his limitations as a speaker, the Branch Committee will need to think carefully about whether to appoint him. If he is appointed, perhaps he could be assigned to serve as a session chairman or to offer one of the prayers.

25. Accident Prevention and Security: Give attention to safety when setting up and dismantling at conventions. Do so also when transporting equipment, chairs, or groups of brothers to and from the convention site. Make sure that well-trained and responsible adults are selected in connection with any installation or the use of potential-

ly dangerous equipment, including electrical equipment. Be aware of the danger of theft and vandalism. Ensure that alert brothers are assigned to keep watch over money and valuable equipment, such as sound equipment, at the convention site.

26. Regional Convention Assignments for Branch Committee Members: Branch Committee members should attend one or more regional conventions of their selection at their own expense or through private funding. Please note that as is the case with all Bethel family members, a day and a half of time away from work will be granted to Branch Committee members and their wives in connection with only one yearly regional convention of their choice.

27. In addition, particularly in larger branches, Branch Committee members are encouraged to **attend two additional conventions assigned by the branch.** For these two special assignments, convention and travel time necessary will be granted to the brothers and their wives. At times, because of location or other circumstances, a number of regional conventions might not be visited by a Branch Committee member or another responsible Bethel representative. Where that is the case, the talks given by a Branch Committee member could be video streamed to such regional conventions as long as the technology is available. This provision would allow the audiences at those locations to have some exposure to a Branch Committee member.

28. Convention funds may not be used to defray the Branch Committee member's travel costs resulting from these two additional conventions. However, if no local private funds are offered, the related travel expenses incurred by the Branch Committee member and his wife, if she accompanies him, may be reimbursed by the organization.

29. If it were practical for a Branch Committee member to use a branch vehicle in order to attend any of the two additional conventions to which he is assigned, the fuel charge would be noted as an organizational expense. Such factors as the distance to be traveled and the length of time a brother would be away from his Bethel assignment would need to be weighed to determine whether it would be practical to use a branch vehicle. In case the Branch Committee member is unable to drive, a Bethel driver may need to be assigned to assist him. If so, the driver would be granted the necessary time away from work.

30. Speakers Attending a Convention in Another Country: At times Bethel speakers, missionaries, and circuit overseers make personal plans to attend a regional convention outside of their branch territory. If a qualified speaker serving in one of these forms of special full-time service will be attending a regional convention in another country, using his personal time away and private travel funds, his speaker's ratings may be forwarded to that branch office. (It is not necessary to survey the brothers to find out if they will be attending conventions in other lands.) The responsible brothers in the country that he will be visiting may assign him a part on the program in harmony with his qualifications. Or he may be interviewed during one of the parts. However, a branch need not feel obligated to include such a visiting speaker on the program.—See 6:81.

31. News Service for Circuit and Regional Events: Each year an updated package containing timely guidelines is made available to all branches via the Materials Distribution System (MDS).

32. Annual Report to Teaching Committee: An annual report should be sent to the Teaching Committee, outlining the total number of conventions held in the branch territory, the peak at-

tendance, and the baptism figure. If a branch oversees the work in other countries, a separate report should be submitted for each country. This information should be listed in two columns—one showing the figures for the current year and the other showing the figures for the preceding year. Please also state in one paragraph which features of the program were particularly effective for your field and why.

CONGREGATION MEETINGS

33. Unless there are extreme extenuating circumstances, congregations worldwide hold one midweek meeting sometime Monday through Friday. This meeting is formatted as follows: After an opening song and prayer, the Congregation Bible Study is conducted for 30 minutes, followed by the Theocratic Ministry School for 30 minutes. Then, after an introductory song, the Service Meeting is held for 30 minutes. The entire meeting is closed with song and prayer. The aforementioned three meetings should not be combined with the Public Meeting and *Watchtower* Study, which are to be held on the weekend (Saturday or Sunday), unless extreme circumstances exist.

34. For the Public Meeting, after an opening song and prayer, a 30-minute public talk is presented from one of the approved outlines on the list "Public Meeting Talk Titles" (S-99) or as otherwise provided by the organization for special occasions, such as the circuit overseer's visit. Normally, following the Public Meeting and after an introductory song, the scheduled *Watchtower* Study article is reviewed by the congregation as a question-and-answer session lasting one hour. The discussion includes the reading of all the paragraphs and all the scriptures marked "read," as well as a brief consideration of the review box. The scriptures marked "read" should not be read before the reading of the paragraph unless the lesson is a verse-by-verse discussion with the scrip-

ture cited at the very beginning of the paragraph. Paragraph reading should be uninterrupted.

35. The above-mentioned format varies only during the visit of the circuit overseer as outlined in *Circuit Overseer Guidelines (tg)*, chapter 4. When several congregations meet in one Kingdom Hall, those not being visited will adjust meeting times as needed for that week. Any schedule of meeting times that involves rotation is worked out through the elders in a spirit of mutual concern and brotherly love.—Phil. 2:2-4; 1 Pet. 3:8.

36. Audio transmissions of our regular congregation meetings may be made for those truly unable to attend. Official audio recordings are another option. (Helpful comments appear on MDS regarding the technical aspects associated with this provision.) Video transmission of our meetings over the Internet is not approved. Easy Internet video access to our meetings could stifle live attendance and increase the potential for misuse of the information being transmitted. However, if the technical means is available and the body of elders knows that a member of the congregation is truly housebound on a long-term basis, the elders may decide to make available a **video recording** of the meetings for that person.

37. Meetings for Foreign-Language Groups: When there are only a few publishers working a foreign-language field, a group can be formed under the supervision of a host congregation. (*km* 11/09 p. 5 par. 10; *tg* chap. 17) Such foreign-language groups may hold their Congregation Bible Study in a separate room at the Kingdom Hall at the same time as the meeting of the host congregation. In cases of severe space constraints, the group may hold this 30-minute meeting just prior to the host congregation's midweek meeting. If this is not possible, a less preferred option would be to have the group meet

just before or after the host congregation's Public Meeting and *Watchtower* Study. A foreign-language group that has grown in size may be transferred to another host congregation that meets at a Kingdom Hall with a larger auxiliary room. In any event, the foreign-language group should be encouraged to attend the midweek meeting of the congregation officially appointed as its host.

- **Audio and video tie-in:** Conducting congregation meetings locally is preferable. However, if such is not yet possible and the congregations are willing to obtain the necessary equipment, a pregroup, group, or small congregation may request permission from the circuit overseer to tie in to the meetings of a foreign-language congregation holding meetings in the target language. The circuit overseer will approve which pregroups, groups, or small congregations in his circuit will tie in to the meetings of another congregation and to what extent. The circuit overseer must consider all of the factors surrounding the request in deciding whether to give approval for such an arrangement or not. If a small congregation is approved to tie in to the meetings of another congregation periodically, it is expected that the small congregation will strive to conduct all of its own meetings as soon as possible. Congregations transmitting video should not transmit footage of the audience or any other areas of the Kingdom Hall.—See letter to all bodies of elders, October 2, 2014, regarding "Foreign-language field."

38. If a group is making good progress, has responsible ones available to take the lead, and has reasonable prospects for further growth, consideration may be given to forming a congregation. (*tg* chap. 13) Meetings should be conducted in the language of the group

even if only a few publications are available. For example, the Congregation Bible Study and the Theocratic Ministry School may be conducted using just the first few publications on the translation priority list. Understandably, the schedules and the content of such meetings would differ from those of the major languages.

39. In the event that no responsible brothers in the group are available to conduct the meeting on a particular day, an interpreter could be used so that most would be able to understand the comments of the assigned conductor or public speaker for that occasion. This would harmonize with the precedent found in 1 Corinthians chapter 14. Also, it should be noted that many languages have a suitable vernacular Bible translation or at least a portion of it. The brothers should be encouraged to use these Bibles at their meetings and in the field ministry.

40. When no publications are available in a certain language, meetings could be conducted using our publications in another language as long as most in the group are able to follow along. For example, an indigenous group may also understand a major language in which publications are readily available. However, all talks, prayers, question-and-answer sessions, and meetings should be conducted in the language of the group. As mentioned above, if the assigned conductor does not speak the language of the group, a qualified interpreter may assist him. Also, when a group is started, it may be possible for the brother assigned as reader for the Congregation Bible Study or the *Watchtower* Study to make a personal translation of the material under discussion, although this is not ideal. Once meetings are held regularly in the language of the group and the formation of a congregation is imminent, the Branch Committee should contact the Writing Committee, outlining the needs of the congregation and providing the

names of any baptized Witnesses who could be used as translators.—See 8: 25-27.

DEDICATION PROGRAMS

Branch Dedications

41. Dedication programs are special occasions of great spiritual encouragement for Jehovah's people. These programs are held in connection with newly acquired or newly built facilities that are fully owned by the organization. Months in advance of a branch dedication, an overview of the plans, including details about the program content, rooming for guests, feeding, and so forth, should be sent to the Teaching Committee for final review and approval. If an exception to the following guidelines is necessary, the Branch Committee should contact the Teaching Committee before proceeding.

42. If a four-page printed program is planned, the branch should submit the recommended text and a PDF of the proposed design directly to the Writing Committee. The text in the program sample will be reviewed and approved by the Teaching Committee, while the actual design of the program will be reviewed and approved by the Writing Committee.

43. Day and Time for Program: It seems practical that a branch dedication program be held on a Saturday. A program approximately three hours in length should be arranged. If one or more talks need to be interpreted, the program may take another 30-40 minutes. The following may be adjusted to fit local circumstances.

44. Sample Program Format:

- | | |
|------------|---|
| 10 min: | Opening song and prayer. |
| 20 min: | History of work in the country.
(Includes interview of two or three longtime missionaries if available.) |
| 30-40 min: | Construction project and experiences. (May include interviews with key workers.) |

20 min:	Reports from other branches. (If available.)
15 min:	Song, announcements, and greetings.
45-60 min:	Dedication talk. (If interpreted, additional time may be needed.)
10 min:	Closing song and prayer.

45. The chairman will give the opening words of welcome. Then for about **20 minutes**, a member of the Branch Committee should relate the history of the Kingdom work in that country, followed by how Jehovah opened up the way for a new branch to be constructed. If there are longtime missionaries present, approximately **eight minutes** can be dedicated to interview them. They may comment on their share in the early development of the work and relate any personal experiences involved. Then **30-40 minutes** should be used to discuss the construction project itself. A member of the Branch Committee who served on the construction committee is usually assigned this part. It could be developed as a discussion by three brothers, two of whom would be members of the construction committee. It may include a few interviews with key workers on the project. These interviews could highlight problems that were overcome, relate any outstanding experiences that took place in obtaining equipment and accomplishing the work, or indicate how a witness was given to the community. This discussion could conclude by referring to the fine cooperation of the local brothers and the way Jehovah blessed the activity.

46. If there are a few Branch Committee members present from nearby branches, a representative from each may use from **four to six minutes** to relate outstanding experiences and reports about the progress of the work in those countries. This segment could be about **20 minutes** in length. It would be followed by song, announcements, and the reading of any greetings, all of which should take no longer than **15 minutes**.

47. Dedication Talk: If a member of the Governing Body is assigned to attend the dedication, he will give the dedication talk. This discourse is usually about an hour in length, but if interpreted, it may take 90 minutes or more.

48. Invitations and Seating: The program will generally originate from the branch's main auditorium. Overflow seating may be set up in a Kingdom Hall or an Assembly Hall on the property of the branch being dedicated. Extra chairs may also be set up in dining rooms and in other locations on the premises. The number invited will depend on the size of the facilities, the number in the Bethel family, the size of the construction staff, and the number of visitors from other branches. In some branches, those in the field who have served faithfully in the truth for 40 or more years have been included.

49. What is outlined herein for the dedication program on Saturday (and the special meeting on Sunday, as discussed later) should produce a program that will be spiritually upbuilding. A tour of the facility and association with the Bethel family and others can encourage visitors to continue doing Jehovah's will. However, there is no need to arrange for a family night program. Family night should be scheduled at another time, exclusively for the Bethel family and any approved guests. Entertainment programs for visitors require many hours of rehearsal and therefore should not be approved for presentation. By keeping the arrangements simple and on a high spiritual level, such occasions will be delightful and beneficial for all.

50. Printed Invitations: Some branches have printed badge cards for attendees, similar in size to the badge cards used at regional conventions. This helps to ensure that only those invited will be permitted entry. This can also be done for the special program on Sunday if seating is limited.

51. Food Arrangements: If Saturday morning is devoted to tours, there could be a light buffet meal at noon or light packed lunches for the visitors. The dedication program could begin at 1:30 p.m. or 2:00 p.m. A light buffet meal in the evening would be appropriate for the Bethel family, the construction staff, and any overnight guests staying at the branch. However, there should be no elaborate arrangements for feeding everyone who attends the dedication program. If there are questions about this, please write to the Teaching Committee before plans are finalized.

52. Special Meeting on Sunday: If practical, a special program may be held on Sunday at a larger hall or stadium. The program could begin at 9:30 a.m. or 10:00 a.m. The format for this special meeting may be as follows: After an introductory song and prayer, the chairman will extend a warm welcome to the audience and make a few encouraging comments. Then he will introduce a 30-minute summary of the *Watchtower* Study for that week. Afterward, a 20-minute review of the dedication program that was held on the preceding day may be presented as a discussion between two Branch Committee members. Next, Branch Committee members or representatives from other branches may present four or five reports, as they did the day before. This segment could last up to 30 minutes, depending on whether interpretation is needed. After another song, announcements can be made along with the reading of any greetings. Then the visiting speaker will give a one-hour service talk. (If interpreted, this talk may take 90 minutes or more.) The special meeting would end with a closing song and prayer.

53. Use of Interpreters: It is preferred that the most qualified brothers be assigned to interpret talks given by members of the Governing Body, even if it is necessary to use younger brothers. A brother's depth of experience in

theocratic and organizational matters does not necessarily make him the finest choice of interpreter. Those assigned should be able to communicate the emphasis, intensity, and emotion of the speaker into the target language, while not calling undue attention to themselves. Those who are selected for this privilege should be reminded of the principles expressed at Romans 12:3 and 1 Corinthians 12:28-31 so that they maintain a humble disposition while carrying out this special responsibility. —See 7:7-8, 70.

Assembly Hall Dedications

54. When a new Assembly Hall is built or an existing facility has undergone extensive renovation resulting in a significant change of its floor plan and overall appearance, a dedication program would be in order. Generally, there would be only one guest speaker assigned to an Assembly Hall dedication. Organization funds may be used to cover the travel expenses of only one Branch Committee member and his wife. Also, only one Branch Committee member should share in the dedication program. When the dedication speaker is a member of the Governing Body, the program should be held on a Saturday. In this case, one Branch Committee member may be assigned to present a report on the advancement of the Kingdom work in the country, while focusing on the progress of the work in the area of the Assembly Hall. (See 7:56.) As described below, an additional special program should be arranged for Sunday of the same weekend. During that program, the same Branch Committee member may be assigned to present a 30-minute summary of the *Watchtower* Study for that week or an additional report on the work in the local branch territory. Other Branch Committee members may attend both programs if they wish, but they would not be assigned a part and their travel expenses should be covered by private funds. Please note that a visiting Governing Body member would not nor-

mally be assigned to visit the branch and conduct morning worship in conjunction with the dedication of an Assembly Hall unless the facility is *very close* to Bethel. Any exceptions would need to be approved by the Teaching Committee.

55. The dedication program may be video streamed, if possible, to the Kingdom Halls of the congregations that will make use of the Assembly Hall. If video streaming is not possible, only those who can be accommodated in the Assembly Hall would be invited to the dedication program on Saturday. (In order to make it possible for more brothers to attend, the visiting Governing Body member may agree to give his dedication talk again during a second program that would be presented later on Saturday, but this decision is left to the visiting Governing Body member.) The Branch Committee determines who will be invited.—See 7:62.

56. The dedication program need not be longer than two and a half hours. A brief history of the progress of the Kingdom work in the area may be presented, possibly including an interview of one or two longtime Witnesses. Experiences and comments by those being interviewed should be to the point. Participants should emphasize, not so much how the building was constructed, but how Jehovah blessed the work and the effect the project has had on the community and on the brothers.—Acts 14:27.

57. Slide or video presentations should be no more than 15 minutes in length. Just a few of the main construction phases should be featured. The presentation should be dignified and the content in good taste, forasmuch as the program is an occasion to praise Jehovah for his blessing on the project.

58. The dedication talk may be up to one hour in length. If interpreted into another language, it will be somewhat longer.

59. The Assembly Hall is to be dedicated only once, by means of a prayer. When it is practical to schedule a second program later in the day or on the next day, the speaker will explain that the building was dedicated at the preceding program.

60. A tour of the Assembly Hall or an open house may be arranged before the dedication program. If the program is scheduled in the afternoon, the open house could be organized in the morning. Or, if more convenient, it may be arranged on the day before or even one or two weeks prior to the dedication. If practical, arrangements can be made to serve light snacks or refreshments but no alcoholic beverages. Many brothers have found this to be a fine time to invite businessmen and officials who may have become familiar with our work and who may have expressed a desire to see the completed building. It is appropriate for an elder to be assigned to escort these individuals and to make their visit informative and pleasant. Other guests may also be given a brief tour by one of the attendants. Such tours are generally scheduled for the morning or early afternoon prior to the dedication program.—See 7:64-65.

61. Program participants should be exemplary, active Jehovah's Witnesses. There is no provision for government officials or others to address the audience on any occasion, just as is the case at any theocratic meeting. If an official wishes to make a brief speech or offer expressions of appreciation at a dedication program, he may be received hospitably and given audience by a few responsible brothers in a separate room before or after the program.

62. Seating: The hall should be filled for the dedication program, but it may be necessary to limit the number invited in order to avoid overcrowding. In some cases, those invited are limited to those in special full-time service, elders, ministerial servants, regular pioneers, and their families, along with those who have been baptized for a

certain number of years. Invitations are often extended to those who contributed much in the way of time, effort, or materials toward the construction.—See 7:55.

63. Sunday Program Format: If the visiting dedication speaker is a Governing Body member, an additional special program lasting about two hours (or two and a half hours if interpretation is required) should be arranged for Sunday. Depending on local circumstances and the practicality of the arrangement, the special Sunday program could be video streamed from the Assembly Hall being dedicated to the Kingdom Halls of the congregations that will make use of the new facility. If local circumstances do not allow video streaming of the special program to most of the publishers in the congregations making use of the Assembly Hall and the country is one seldom visited by a member of the Governing Body, a larger facility could be rented for a special Sunday program if that is practical. The program will have the following format:

5 min:	Opening song and prayer, followed by a few encouraging comments by the chairman.
30 min:	<i>Watchtower</i> Study summary. (To be presented by a Branch Committee member if a report about the work in the branch territory will not be included on the program.)
20 min:	(Optional) If the Branch Committee has a report about the work in the branch territory, it can be presented by the Branch Committee member sharing the program. (Another experienced local brother could be assigned to handle the <i>Watchtower</i> Study summary.)
10 min:	Song and any needed announcements.
60 min:	Talk by the visiting Governing Body member. (When interpreted, this service talk could take 90 minutes or more.)
5 min:	Closing song and prayer.

Dedications of Remote Translation Offices (RTOs)

64. A dedication program may be organized in connection with a new re-

mote translation office (RTO) as long as the premises are owned by the organization. Hence, no dedication program will be arranged when a rental facility is being used. A visiting Governing Body member, a Branch Committee member, or another qualified brother could be assigned to give the dedication talk in conjunction with a scheduled trip to the region, such as a visit to the missionaries or the translation team. The program may be held at the Kingdom Hall closest to the RTO and should follow a format similar to that used for Kingdom Hall dedications. If necessary, the dedication program could be held at a rented facility near the RTO. Appropriate arrangements should be made for all in attendance to tour the RTO, preferably prior to the dedication program.—See 7:60.

Kingdom Hall Dedications

65. The most up-to-date guidelines on this subject, as provided to all bodies of elders and circuit overseers, should be followed when arranging for these events. (See 7:60.) Travel expenses for a Bethel speaker must be covered by the congregation or by private funds. If it is not possible to invite a speaker from Bethel, a circuit overseer or a local elder should be assigned to deliver the Kingdom Hall dedication talk.

66. Normally, other facilities will not be tied in for these programs. But if there are extenuating circumstances warranting an exception, the Branch Committee may decide to give approval. For example, when several congregations share in a project, it may not be possible to include all the publishers who worked on the building. Hence, it might be necessary to tie in a neighboring Kingdom Hall so that all can benefit from the dedication program. The Teaching Committee should be contacted for approval if the Branch Committee feels that something more than what is outlined above will be necessary.

BRANCH VISITS

67. Special Program: Arrangements should be made to hold a special program at a suitable location for the brothers living in the branch territory. Since this is a special event, branches may arrange for an audio or audio/video tie-in to Assembly Halls even in other countries under their oversight so that as many publishers as possible may hear the program. Please note that dedication programs for newly acquired or newly built facilities should not be scheduled during a branch visit. Normally, all such events are arranged at a different time. If a Branch Committee feels that extenuating local circumstances would warrant an exception in this regard, an inquiry including all pertinent details may be submitted to the Teaching Committee.

68. If the cost is not excessive, the branch may rent one large facility, such as a stadium or a sports hall, relatively close to the branch office to accommodate a larger crowd. With a rented facility, if possible and the costs are not excessive, Kingdom Halls or Assembly Halls in other parts of the branch territory may be connected by an audio or audio/video tie-in. The rental of additional facilities for tie-in purposes is viewed as an exception based on extenuating circumstances. The Teaching Committee will decide on a case-by-case basis.

69. If the branch territory spans many time zones, the program may be delay-streamed or recorded for broadcasting later on the same day or on the very next day at Assembly Halls and Kingdom Halls located in other time zones. This would especially be true if a Governing Body member is making a branch shepherding visit. Any questions or unusual circumstances related to the special program should be sent to the Teaching Committee.

70. The program should include a 30-minute summary of the *Watchtower*

Study for that week. A 20-minute report on the progress of the Kingdom work in the country can be included as well. The total time for the program would be approximately three hours, especially if the headquarters representative's talk needs to be interpreted. (See 7:7, 53.) In such instances, the headquarters representative may give a copy of his talk outline or notes in advance to the assigned interpreter. This copy is to be used only for preparation purposes. It should not be used by the interpreter during the actual presentation of the talk. The notes should be returned to the speaker or destroyed after the program. Before delivery of the talk, the headquarters representative should meet with the interpreter to cover pertinent information. While the headquarters representative may speak from an outline, it is best if the interpreter does not follow a translated copy of that outline. Rather, the interpreter should listen carefully to the speaker's delivery and convey an accurate interpretation to the audience. (*be* p. 55.) Branches that may have more than one language group represented at these occasions should make arrangements to hold the program in the language of the majority. At times, if practical, it may also be possible to arrange for simultaneous interpretation into any other language(s) represented, as long as this would not serve as a distraction to the rest of the audience. Generally, with the exception of the headquarters representative (who may not know the language of the land), all speakers should present their talks uninterrupted in one language for the benefit of the majority present. Since the program would include the *Watchtower* Study summary and it is a spiritually rich program, the scheduled public talk and *Watchtower* Study for the invited congregations will be suspended for that week. Therefore, depending on the itinerary of the headquarters representative, it might be advantageous to schedule this program on a Sunday if possible. Even if the special program is scheduled during the week,

the publishers can be encouraged to concentrate on sharing in the field ministry on the weekend, since there will be no meeting.—See 6:194.

BETHEL SPEAKERS

71. Evaluation and Selection of Bethel Speakers: Pertinent guidelines for bodies of elders and circuit overseers about "Recommending Local Elders as Regional Convention Speakers" and "Regional Convention Speaker Ratings" are posted on MDS. Yearly evaluations received from the circuits for all brothers recommended as regional convention speakers can be used as a basis for selecting new Bethel speakers. All elders serving at Bethel should be rated even if they have had only limited exposure on circuit assembly programs. Those serving in foreign-language congregations should be rated both for the language of their congregation and for the primary language of the country. Usually, those appointed as Bethel speakers would be ones who were rated higher than average in their circuits and have served at Bethel for some years, as noted in 7:72. Brothers called to Bethel from the circuit work, however, may be appointed as Bethel speakers upon completing Bethel Entrants' School.

72. An elder serving as a regular Bethel family member (BBR) who has been on a regional convention program for two years will be eligible for consideration as a Bethel speaker, as long as he meets the following additional criteria: (1) His speaker rating is B or higher; (2) he has served at Bethel for a minimum of three years, including consecutive periods of temporary service; (3) he has a reputation worthy of representing Bethel; and (4) he is able to hold an audience's attention for one hour. Furthermore, when a brother is first notified of his appointment as a Bethel speaker, it is recommended that about six months be allowed to pass before his first assignment so that he may have time to prepare a suitable one-hour service talk. In view of this, when deciding

whether a brother should be appointed as a Bethel speaker, those recommending Bethel speakers should give serious consideration to whether he could give an effective one-hour service talk. Since a brother's qualifications for presenting a one-hour talk would need to be much higher than for presenting a nine-minute convention talk, an individual might be qualified to serve as a regional convention speaker but not as a Bethel speaker. As an example, those recommending Bethel speakers would do well to ask themselves if they view the brother in question as qualified to address their own congregations for one hour. Hence, as a general rule, a brother would qualify to be used on a regional convention program before he could serve as a Bethel speaker. Temporary volunteers serving at Bethel during the convention season may be asked to indicate the convention they will attend. Talks may be assigned to them according to the need and their qualifications.—See 6:80-81.

73. Circuit assembly branch representatives are selected from among the better qualified and highest rated Bethel speakers. In large branches, those considered for this privilege have served at Bethel for many years. At smaller branches, the Branch or Country committee may need to consider using brothers who have served for fewer years, bearing in mind that Bethel representatives should nonetheless be exemplary in their conduct and public speaking.—See 6:82; 7:2; 1 Tim. 4:12.

74. Weekend Speaking Assignments: Congregations near the branch office may request that approved Bethel speakers be assigned to give a service talk and public talk. A Speaking Assignment Desk may be set up in the Service Department for scheduling these assignments. When an assignment is made, the "Notice to Congregation of Bethel Speaker Assignments" (S-35) is sent to the congregation and the "Notice to Bethel Speaker of Assignments" (S-37) is sent to the speaker.

75. Generally, Bethel speakers would not receive more than three weekend speaking assignments per year. Likewise, individual congregations will be officially assigned only three Bethel speakers each year. Bethel speakers may not be requested by name for these assignments. They may be sent to congregations within 200 miles (320 km) of Bethel, if that distance is practical. Whatever the radius from Bethel, the speaker should be able to travel safely to and from the assignment with minimal impact on his Bethel work. The brother (and his wife) should be able to arrive back at Bethel and get a good night's sleep on Sunday evening. If the Public Meeting is held late on Sunday and the location is a considerable distance from Bethel, the speaker may return early Monday morning without taking personal time away as long as he is back at his work assignment after lunch.

76. Brothers who are regular Bethel family members serving at remote translation offices may be appointed as Bethel speakers and assigned to visit congregations within 200 miles of their location. However, the branch office may opt to make the travel radius less than 200 miles if local circumstances would make it difficult for the brothers to travel that far in a weekend and still return in good time to carry out their weekly Bethel routine.

77. The speaker's travel expenses should be covered by the local congregation. If that is not possible, the branch may reimburse the speaker's travel expenses, having in mind the cost of public transportation, the distances involved, and the current price of fuel if a personal vehicle is used. If the speaker's wife travels with him and they use public transportation, he would not submit her fare for reimbursement. If the congregation does not supply meals, the speaker may be reimbursed for that expense. However, when a congregation chooses to invite

a particular Bethel speaker for a special weekend of activity apart from those arranged by the Speaking Desk, all travel expenses for the speaker (and his wife) should be covered either with private contributions or with congregation funds as approved by a resolution. Also, the Bethel speaker (and his wife) would need to deduct personal time away from work if their trip to or from any such private commitments must be done during Bethel workdays.

78. Bethel speakers are expected to share with the congregation in field service on the weekend of their public talks, according to local arrangements.

79. Slide shows, *PowerPoint*, or video presentations are not approved for use on Bethel speaking assignments. Saturday service talks should be Scriptural and encouraging discussions, generally only one hour in length. Such talks may be shortened to 30 minutes if they must be presented after the regular one-hour *Watchtower* Study.

80. Only approved Bethel speakers are to present service talks to the congregations. As an exception, visiting missionaries who are qualified may present a *special service talk* but only at the Kingdom Hall and at a time other than that scheduled for regular congregation meetings. For these special presentations, a missionary could use a few visual aids, including pictures from the area where he serves. However, such pictures should not overshadow the Scriptural message of his talk. Visiting missionaries might also give a brief report during a local needs part on the Service Meeting or after an unabbreviated *Watchtower* Study, if requested.

MORNING WORSHIP AT BETHEL

81. General Guidelines: Diligence is essential in preparing information that is of benefit to the Bethel family. Those entrusted with this serious assignment ought to handle it in accord with the

principle found at Romans 12:8. The assigned chairman should arrive at the table approximately ten minutes before the start of the program so that he can settle in and get any needed observations from the sound technicians or other responsible brothers at Bethel.

82. In most branches, morning worship begins at 7:00 a.m., with the chairman taking no more than a few seconds to welcome the family. He then calls on the brother assigned to offer a brief opening prayer of one minute or less. This prayer should include giving thanks for the breakfast meal to follow. Thereafter, the daily text is read, and the chairman calls on each of those assigned to offer a one-minute comment. Although it is appropriate to acknowledge each comment, care should be exercised not to exalt any one participant over the others. After the last one on the panel has commented, the chairman takes eight or nine minutes to develop a few Scriptural thoughts for the encouragement of the family. Quoted scriptures should be read directly from a hard copy of the Bible or from an electronic device rather than from printed notes except when paraphrasing certain verses.

83. The chairman should strive to conclude his comments by 7:15 a.m. at the latest. Then, he calls on the brother assigned to read the printed comments from *Examining the Scriptures Daily*. Next, he invites the family to enjoy their breakfast.

84. At approximately 7:30 a.m., the chairman makes announcements. Selected greetings may be read once a week at the discretion of the Branch or Country committee. Greetings and table announcements should be approved by the Bethel Office or by a member of the Branch Committee. Next, an assigned brother will read a scheduled segment from either the Bible or the *Yearbook*. On Wednesdays, Bible highlights are presented. Bible highlights will be five minutes in dura-

tion, while department or branch visit reports may be up to ten minutes in length and presented after the Bible highlights. The chairman should make announcements regarding memorial services or judicial action just before his concluding prayer. He should kindly allow a few seconds for the family to stand up before saying the concluding prayer. This format for morning worship at Bethel should be followed at other sites outside of Bethel, such as remote translation offices (RTOs). While this same general format can be followed at the various field schools, the brothers should be guided by the instructions provided in the *School for Kingdom Evangelizers Office Guidelines (skeog).*

85. Transmissions to Other Sites:

Inasmuch as Morning Worship programs are designed exclusively for the spiritual benefit of regular members of the Bethel family and temporary volunteers at the branch, such programs should not be transmitted to outside locations other than as explained below. Although local Morning Worship programs may be held at remote translation offices (RTOs) as long as sufficient qualified personnel are on hand, transmissions to and from the branch may be arranged if such would not require a great expenditure. Where implemented, such a local arrangement should give all RTO personnel an opportunity to share in the program in a way similar to what is done at the branch. (Approved overnight guests staying at the branch may attend morning worship along with the Bethel family.) Those in special full-time service working on remote construction projects, primarily construction servants (BCS), expatriate construction servants (BCE), and construction volunteers (BCV), may be tied in to the Bethel Morning Worship program up to four days each week. Each location should arrange for at least one local Morning Worship program each week. The Branch Committee may determine how many times a week those on a specific project will benefit from the Beth-

el program. If there are also local volunteers working on the same project, they are permitted to enjoy the program along with those who are in special full-time service. If because of time-zone differences the program will be delay-streamed or a recording of the program is made, prayers should be said locally. Assembly Hall servants (BAS) are also permitted to view morning worship under the same arrangements as outlined above for construction workers in special full-time service. However, BAS are not to invite local volunteers to join them for the program.

86. Visiting Morning Worship

Chairman: A brother visiting from another branch is not to be invited to serve as chairman for morning worship—even if he is used in that capacity at his home branch—unless he is a member of the Governing Body or an appointed helper to one of the Governing Body committees and serves as Morning Worship chairman at world headquarters. A headquarters representative will preside over the program on the days that he is assigned to visit the branch.

87. Additionally, a brother visiting a remote translation office under the oversight of his home branch may be asked to conduct morning worship only if (1) the branch has assigned him to make the visit, (2) he already serves as Morning Worship chairman at the branch, and (3) there are very few local brothers approved to conduct.

88. Recommendations of Morning Worship Chairmen:

These should be submitted on the most current *Recommendations to Teaching Committee* form. This is true for ones who will serve in this capacity at the branch or at an RTO. The details requested on this form should guide the Branch Committee and the Teaching Committee in evaluating who is qualified for this special privilege. Elders may be considered who have served in an exemplary way at Bethel for a number of years, who en-

joy the respect of the Bethel family, who are viewed as solid spiritual men, and who are good teachers. Brothers serving as construction servants may be recommended as well if they are qualified. In addition, time spent in some form of special full-time service before coming to Bethel may be taken into account. Those recommended should be capable of giving good Scriptural encouragement to the Bethel family.

89. Selection of Other Morning Worship Participants:

Brothers and sisters who are regular members of the family (BBR), as well as those serving as temporary Bethel family members (BBT), may be assigned to give a one-minute text comment upon completion of Bethel Entrants' School or their first year of Bethel service, whichever comes first. Construction servants (BCS), expatriate construction servants (BCF), and construction volunteers (BCV) should be assigned to give comments at morning worship during their stay at the branch regardless of the length of time they have been assigned to serve at Bethel. Full-time commuters (BBL) may also be assigned as commenters during morning worship. Part-time commuters (BBV), on the other hand, may attend on the days they work at Bethel but would not usually be approved as commenters.

90. If the Branch or Country committee feels that an exception is warranted in the case of a potential Morning Worship commenter, the matter should be brought to the attention of the Teaching Committee for review. In smaller branches where commenters are not specifically assigned in advance, the Branch Committee can determine whether part-time commuters may participate.—See 7:98.

91. After a sister has given her first text comment, she has the option of sending a note to the Bethel Office requesting to be exempted from a future Morning Worship assignment.

92. Bethel Family Prayers: At larger branches, noon prayers are generally assigned to elders who have served at Bethel for at least one year. After serving at Bethel and as an elder for five years, a brother may be assigned to represent the family in prayer at morning worship.

93. Readings and Bible Highlights: Generally, Bethel speakers are used to read assigned portions of the Bible at morning worship, present Bible highlights, and read at the Bethel Family *Watchtower* Study.

94. At times, a Branch Committee may decide that circumstances warrant using other qualified elders not yet appointed as Bethel speakers for these assignments.

95. Text and Yearbook Readings: Ministerial servants who have served at Bethel for one year and who have passed the reading evaluation test may be assigned to read the daily text and printed comment and the *Yearbook* at morning worship.

BETHEL FAMILY WATCHTOWER STUDY

96. The weekly *Watchtower* Study is a customary feature of Bethel family life at all branches. Conductors are usually circuit assembly branch representatives. In smaller branches, Bethel speakers may also be assigned.

97. General Guidelines: It is especially important for those assigned as Bethel family *Watchtower* Study conductors to adhere closely to published direction, and these brothers should be encouraged to review such direction periodically. (*ks10* 2:24-25; *w03* 9/1 pp. 21-22) Elders who conduct the *Watchtower* Study in their congregations view the Bethel family *Watchtower* Study as a model to follow. The conductor should prepare thoroughly. He should not introduce additional material from his own personal research, as it could over-

shadow what has been published in the study article. Extensive research has already been done in producing the study material, and the points to be emphasized are those included in the paragraphs under consideration. He should not comment excessively. In some branches, the *Watchtower* Study starts at 6:15 p.m. with the conductor's welcoming expressions and introduction to the opening song and prayer. The call for the concluding song and prayer is at 7:15 p.m. Therefore, the Bethel *Watchtower* Study is conducted within 55 minutes (including appropriate brief comments on the artwork and good use of the teaching boxes). This requires that the conductor apportion the time carefully so as to allow for balanced coverage of the material. The conductor should prepare well, maintain eye contact with the brothers as they offer their comments, and warmly commend the participants. Conductors are to be reminded of these points as needed. Readers for the Bethel family *Watchtower* Study should be chosen from among appointed Bethel speakers.

98. In larger families, about 20 brothers may be assigned to participate as commenters. Regular Bethel family members (BBR), temporary Bethel family members (BBT), construction servants (BCS), and full-time commuters (BBL) may be used for these assignments. Part-time commuters (BBV) may attend but would not usually be approved as commenters. (See the exception in 7:89-90.) As an additional exception, believing marriage mates of BBLs and BBVs may attend the Bethel family *Watchtower* Study and other spiritual programs typically held on Monday evenings, whether at Bethel or at a remote translation office. Also, well-behaved children still residing at home may join their parent(s) for such programs if there is adequate space for all such ones to attend. (This provision does not include morning worship.) Each week, those in special full-time service working on remote construction projects

(primarily BCS, BCF, and BCV) may be tied in to the Bethel family *Watchtower* Study (and any additional spiritual program on that evening). Local volunteers working on the project who are not in special full-time service would not be invited to this program. If because of time-zone differences the program will be delay-streamed or a recording of the program is made, prayers should be said locally. Assembly Hall servants (BAS) are also permitted to tie in to the Bethel family *Watchtower* Study under the same arrangements as outlined above for construction workers in special full-time service.

SCHOOLS FOR THEOCRATIC TRAINING

99. Watchtower Bible School of Gilead: This 20-week course provides intensive training in Bible study and theocratic organization. Invitations to attend this school are issued by the Service Committee. The Teaching Committee is responsible for the curriculum.

100. School for Branch Committee Members and Their Wives: The Service Committee invites qualifying members of Branch and Country committees and their wives to this eight-week course in accord with current guidelines. The Teaching Committee is responsible for the curriculum.

101. School for Circuit Overseers and Their Wives (SCOTW): Unless the Service Committee has granted an exception, this school is not to be held on branch property. If permission was given in the past to hold this school at the branch and it has not been verified that this is still acceptable, the Service Committee should be informed of the current circumstances and, if desired, the branch may request that this arrangement continue. The Service Committee oversees the scheduling of SCOTW worldwide. However, any questions regarding the curriculum for this four-week course should be directed to the Teaching Commit-

tee. In the event that an exception has been granted and the school is held at the branch, arrangements should not be made for class introductions to the Bethel family. Instead, a general Morning Worship table announcement welcoming the new class as a whole can be made to the Bethel family at the beginning of the schooling period. If desired, a parting announcement could also be read to the Bethel family on the last day of class. None of the students should be assigned to give a report to the Bethel family. Additionally, only the *brothers* attending the SCOTW on branch property should be assigned to give a one-minute comment at morning worship. The Teaching Committee is responsible for the curriculum.

102. School for Kingdom Evangelizers (SKE): All reasonable efforts should be made to hold the SKE in the field. Exceptions have at times been made, but only when special circumstances have warranted them. In such cases, however, none of the students attending this school on branch premises would be invited to present reports to the Bethel family or to offer Morning Worship comments. Any questions regarding these matters should be addressed to the Teaching Committee. Qualified single brothers and sisters as well as couples between the ages of 23 and 65 who have been married for at least two years and have been in full-time service for at least the last two consecutive years may apply to attend this eight-week course. (Ps. 68:11) Any applicants between the ages of 50 and 65 must be able to provide for themselves and be in no need of financial or medical assistance from the organization. If enrolled in this school, they will continue to serve as regular pioneers wherever they are assigned by the organization but will not be invited to become members of the Worldwide Order of Special Full-Time Servants.

103. Application forms and related material may be requested from the

congregation secretary. Procedures for holding this course as well as for arranging graduations have been outlined in the *School for Kingdom Evangelizers Instructor Guidelines (skeig)* and the *School for Kingdom Evangelizers Office Guidelines (skeog)*. While the Service Committee oversees the scheduling of these classes worldwide, any questions regarding the curriculum should be directed to the Teaching Committee.

104. Graduations: When Kingdom Halls are not available for holding SKE graduations, a multipurpose room at an Assembly Hall may be used as long as its use does not interfere with any other scheduled event. If it is believed that circumstances warrant the use of the main auditorium of an Assembly Hall and such use would not interfere with a scheduled circuit assembly, the Branch Committee can make the decision without inquiring of the Teaching Committee. Attendance at these graduations should not exceed 350.

105. A Bethel representative may be assigned to serve an SKE graduation *only when* it is possible to care for his travel expenses in one of the following ways: (1) the graduation occurs on the same weekend as a circuit assembly served by the branch representative and the circuit covers the travel expenses; (2) brothers defray the travel expenses from private funds; (3) the Bethel representative uses his own funds to cover the travel expenses; (4) organization funds are used to cover expenses in conjunction with an official work assignment for the branch, such as visiting a remote translation office or missionaries near the graduation site. Where it is not possible to have a Bethel representative present, one of the regular class instructors will serve as chairman for the program, give the graduation talk, and hand out the graduation certificates.

106. In the event that a Bethel representative is present for the graduation, he might be able to conduct morning

worship on Saturday from 7:45 a.m. to 8:00 a.m.; yet, it is up to him to decide if he can accept this responsibility, taking into account his other assignments that weekend—especially if he is also the visiting speaker at a circuit assembly (CA-br).

107. After breakfast and perhaps commencing at 8:30 a.m., the Bethel representative might also be able to present an encouraging talk to the class on a theme of his choice. Or he may prefer to give this talk toward the end of the morning, perhaps commencing at about 11:40 a.m. If serving a circuit assembly (CA-br) on Saturday, he would need to give this discourse either before or after his first talk to the circuit. This Scripturally upbuilding talk may be up to 45 minutes in length.

108. On Sunday, the Bethel representative would ordinarily serve as chairman for the graduation program, although there may be times when it would be better to have the A instructor serve as chairman. In either case, the Bethel representative would present a 20-minute graduation discourse.

109. School Instructors: The Teaching Committee appoints the instructors for the SKE, based on recommendations from Branch Committees. In order to help local brothers qualify as instructors, the Branch Committee appoints them as observers of the class instruction. To appoint a new instructor, the Branch Committee must send its recommendation to the Teaching Committee. All field instructors turning 70 years of age should be transferred to special pioneer service as soon as reasonably possible without adversely impacting any previously scheduled classes. Additional instructors for the SCOTW would be selected from among the most qualified instructors of the SKE. Some who are over 70 years of age might still be qualified as instructors for the one-week School for Congregation Elders (SCE). Hence, if an SCE class is held near a brother's special pioneer as-

signment, he may be assigned to teach it on occasion.—See 7:123.

110. Bethel Entrants' School (BES):

The Teaching Committee has prepared a series of lectures and classroom discussions designed to give new Bethelites a spiritual outlook on their new form of service while quickly acquainting them with the Bethel arrangement. Regular Bethel family members (BBR), temporary Bethel family members (BBT), expatriate Bethel family members (BBF), visiting members (BBB), full-time commuters (BBL), or construction servants (BCS) who are approved to serve at Bethel for one year or longer and who have not attended BES in the past ten years may be enrolled, whether serving at a Bethel complex or a remote translation office. Moreover, in cases where a wife would qualify to attend this school at Bethel in accord with the aforementioned guidelines, her husband would also be automatically enrolled. This instruction is to be presented on 16 Mondays, following the Bethel family *Watchtower* Study. Bethelites should commence this school very soon after their arrival. If there are not enough new members to form a full class, instructors may cover the curriculum informally with those on hand.

111. The curriculum may be adjusted to fit a less formal setting if the intent of the material is not compromised. Some branches find it practical to ask the students to give only one five-minute presentation instead of two while covering sessions 2, 4, 6, 8, and 10 and excluding the presentation for session 12. The rest of the reports may be discussed during the appropriate session. The few participants and the instructor could be seated around a table after the *Watchtower* Study. These classes are not to be held during working hours.

112. Before completing their first year at Bethel, new members are expected to read the entire Bible, from Genesis to Revelation. The branch office should

maintain a record of when each new member completes his Bible reading. Bethel family members often express appreciation for this arrangement.

113. If a Bethelite is getting married to someone not serving at Bethel and the couple are approved for regular Bethel service, both would be enrolled in this course. They should be informed of this when they are interviewed for possible Bethel service. If a marriage takes place between two regular Bethel family members, they would not be enrolled in the course or be required to complete the one-year Bible-reading program for new arrivals. This also applies to regular Bethelites transferring from one branch to another.

114. Additional Provisions: New family members are also given a series of lectures related to Bethel life, work habits, health, study, dress and grooming, and other topics. Branch Committees may adjust these lectures as needed.

115. Pioneer Service School (PSS):

This school provides training for regular pioneers and special full-time servants. These include regular Bethel family members (BBR), expatriate Bethelites (BBF), temporary Bethel family members (BBT), full-time commuters (BBL), construction servants (BCS), expatriate construction servants (BCF), and Assembly Hall servants (BAS). Special pioneers, field missionaries, and wives of circuit overseers who have served as such for at least a year may attend the school again. Field classes should be held at central locations, usually Kingdom Halls. Regular pioneers are invited to attend PSS toward the end of their first year of pioneering. Multiple invitations may be extended to one who is in the aforementioned forms of service as long as he or she has not attended in at least the last five years and classes are not full. There should generally be 20 to 25 students in a class. However, in branches with a sizable number of pioneers, consideration may be given

to increasing the class size to as many as 50 students.

116. The curriculum for this school is based on the textbook *“Fully Accomplish Your Ministry”*—2 Timothy 4:5. (pt14) Capable instructors, usually circuit overseers, will conduct the course. This course is designed to be covered in six days. However, if local circumstances require an adjustment, the Branch Committee should consult with the Teaching Committee about the matter.

117. Since some special pioneers and others attending PSS may have to travel some distance, the school instructors may need to organize rooming accommodations. It may be that local publishers will be happy to provide temporary accommodations. Where possible, students will not be asked to come from too great a distance.

118. The branch will care for the travel and food expenses of special pioneers and field missionaries attending the schools. Congregations may also wish to contribute in some measure. The local circuit will cover the circuit overseer’s expenses. (See S-330 2:5.) The organization does not wish anyone to be unduly burdened in financing a PSS. Instructors should inform the branch office of the needs at each school location.

119. The Service Committee oversees the preparation of the annual pioneer session that is held in conjunction with the circuit assembly (CA-co).

120. School for Congregation Elders (SCE): This one-week school is for the benefit of appointed elders. Its curriculum is posted on MDS. Circuit overseers and Branch Committee members are generally not invited to this school, since they attend either the School for Circuit Overseers and Their Wives or the School for Branch Committee Members and Their Wives. All other elders serving at Bethel and in the field should be invited. Bethelites will be granted time away from work

so that they may attend. Also, a time credit may be given to elders serving as special pioneers equivalent to one quarter of their monthly hour requirement. Regular pioneers may receive a 20-hour credit.

121. It is preferred that a student attend the school to which he is assigned. Exceptions may be made if the Branch Committee feels that such are warranted. For example, if a brother requests permission to attend an SCE being conducted in a different language within the branch territory and the Branch Committee agrees that his request is reasonable, the brother may be authorized to do so. If a student wishes to attend a school in another land and there is a good reason for this exception, the two branch offices may work out the necessary details. The brother should be informed that he will be assigned to one SCE only and that he will be responsible to cover all travel expenses involved.

122. On occasion, someone in special full-time service may request permission to attend an SCE in a nearby country where a class is scheduled in his dominant/preferred language. Such may be approved. The branch office may cover the brother’s travel expenses and all entry visa costs. In determining where the brother will attend the SCE, the branch office should select the country with the most economical round-trip travel fares. If expenses would be unusually high, the branch office should send its recommendation to the Teaching Committee for consideration. If the brother is married and he chooses to bring his wife along, the couple would be responsible for the wife’s travel expenses inasmuch as the husband’s attendance at the SCE is not a branch work assignment. The sister would also need to take personal time away for the extent of the trip.—See 4:113; 7:125.

123. The Branch Committee selects the instructors for this school from

among experienced circuit overseers in the local territory, preferably those who serve as SKE instructors, if they are available.—See 7:109.

124. Kingdom Ministry School (KMS): The curriculum for this program is prepared for appointed elders and, at times, ministerial servants. It is presented in the form of lectures, demonstrations, interviews, and class discussions. Circuit overseers and, at times, Bethel representatives are assigned to conduct this school.

125. Because the Service Committee schedules these schools, it will answer any questions about the inviting of students. Wherever practical, all elders in a given area will convene for the school over a two-day period; when invited, ministerial servants will meet for one day. The school may be conducted on a weekend or for three hours per evening for five nights. In some cases, midweek daytime classes may be preferable, with the course running for two days. The entire body of elders of a congregation should attend at the same time. Requests for permission (as an exception) to attend elsewhere may be handled in harmony with the guidelines given in 7:121-122. The branch office may schedule school sessions in harmony with what is best locally, keeping in mind that all elders in the branch territory should attend the course in a comparatively short time, spanning perhaps three to five weeks. The branch should make arrangements for adequate facilities. Assembly Halls may be used where practical.

126. The most recent KMS textbook is entitled *"Shepherd the Flock of God" —1 Peter 5:2. (ks10)* Refresher courses may be offered periodically, using other suitable material provided by the Teaching Committee. In countries under ban or serious restrictions, Branch Committees may supply congregations with at least one copy of the current textbook to be kept in a safe place for the local

elders to use and study on their own. When the circuit overseer visits, he can help the elders by teaching them from the material they already have on hand.

127. Theocratic Ministry School: Instructions on how the school is to be conducted appear on page one of the Theocratic Ministry School Schedule each year. That schedule indicates which publications are to be used during the year. Branches do not have to request permission from the Teaching Committee to use alternative source material for the school if they select publications available in the local language. This direction applies to the preparation of both the Theocratic Ministry School Schedule (ss) and the Theocratic Ministry School Answer Sheet (sa). If the cited reference material for the Theocratic Ministry School Review is not available in a language used in the local territory, the branch office may formulate new questions and answers based on references that are available in that language, without receiving specific approval from the Teaching Committee.

128. Literacy Classes: The Branch Committee should inform congregations of the provision for learning how to read and write, and they should make definite arrangements for assisting those needing help. In multilingual societies, the best results usually come from teaching people to read and write the primary language spoken at home and in the community where they live. Classes may be held using the brochure *Apply Yourself to Reading and Writing*.

129. Different options are available for organizing literacy classes. Each body of elders should carefully survey the needs of any associated with their congregation and then make arrangements as needed. Material from the weekly Bible reading or from a publication such as *My Book of Bible Stories* may be used for these classes.

130. Oftentimes, classes are held in conjunction with the Theocratic Ministry School. When this is done, the class would be held in a separate room in the Kingdom Hall after the Bible highlights. The Kingdom Hall could also be used at other times during the week, as long as the arrangements would not conflict with another congregation's meeting. Those needing additional help may be tutored on a personal basis. Keep in mind, however, that it would be ill-advised for two individuals of the opposite sex to meet alone unless they are close relatives.

131. Foreign-Language Classes: For details regarding this provision, see 6:76-77.

AUDIO AND VIDEO PRODUCTION

132. The Teaching Committee oversees the work of Audio/Video Services (AVS) at world headquarters, which involves the following areas of responsibility:

133. Audio publications include magazines, books, brochures, dramas, dramatic Bible readings, and choral and orchestral music recordings. The Teaching Committee oversees the recording and distribution of audio publications, whereas the Writing Committee gives approval to translate and record an audio publication because most of these programs are based on printed publications. Thus, new requests for approvals should be addressed to the Writing Committee.

134. The Teaching Committee prepares and produces live-action dramas, sound-only dramas, and dramatic Bible readings and will answer any questions regarding the production of these items.

135. Video publications include general-release videos, jw.org-posted videos, and all sign-language publications. The Writing Committee gives the initial approval to translate and produce

a new video publication, whereas the Teaching Committee cares for both the content and the production of all general-release video publications. Because most sign-language publications are based on a printed publication, the content of these videos is the responsibility of the Writing Committee.

136. Audio and Video Equipment and Facilities: The Teaching Committee approves the type of equipment and the design of facilities for producing audio and video publications. This committee works in concert with the Publishing Committee and the Worldwide Design/Construction Department regarding equipment purchases and construction of audio and video studios.

137. Regional Audio/Video Centers (RAVCs): Under the Teaching Committee, AVS cares for the audio and video needs of the world field. AVS supervises the work of RAVCs in four branches, namely, Brazil, Japan, Netherlands, and South Africa. These branches support the production of audio and video publications in their region of the world. While a number of branches have audio equipment for producing their own vernacular audio publications, an RAVC is available to assist if technical problems arise. The RAVC also assists, as needed, in recording and mixing the vernacular audio for general-release videos and thereafter conveying the necessary assets to AVS for authoring to DVD, uploading for replication, and posting on jw.org.

138. RAVC Support of Sign-Language Publications: The RAVC supports the production of the various sign-language publications in its region. The level of support varies, depending on the number of deaf publishers using the language. Branches with fewer than 200 deaf publishers and a temporary translation team are considered entry-level branches and receive a workstation on loan with minimal RAVC support. Branches with more than 200 deaf publishers and one or

more permanent translation teams are termed mid-level branches and receive the full support of the RAVC. Branches approved to produce the study edition of *The Watchtower—On DVD* in sign language are considered advance-level branches and are thoroughly equipped and trained to care for their own sign-language production, though still under the general direction of the RAVC.

139. Audio and Video on jw.org:

After Web Publishing creates a Web page for a publication, AVS is responsible for uploading audio and video publication files in the various languages. Unless directed otherwise, the RAVC will assist entry- and mid-level branches in preparing the files for this purpose. Generally, if a language has already been approved for release of an audio or video publication on physical media (CD, DVD, or other), no additional approval is needed to have these posted on the Web site.

140. Branch Tour Videos: Branches desiring to produce an on-site tour video for visitors should request approval from the Teaching Committee. These videos should not describe the history of the work in the country but should show what currently transpires at the branch in support of the preaching work. A branch tour video should last ten minutes or less. When submitting a new proposal, please keep the following in mind:

- New audio or video equipment should *not* be purchased for this purpose. If none is available at the branch, it may be possible to use the equipment and expertise of a local brother.
- Please send the Teaching Committee a narrative script in English and a description of the proposed visuals for review and approval before recording.
- If prerecorded music will be included, *Kingdom Melodies* are often used. For any original music donated for such a project, the

branch should obtain a signed release from the owner.

RADIO AND TV PROGRAMS

141. Questions concerning such programs may be sent to the Teaching Committee.

142. Periodically, all branches receive an updated listing of approved videos with guidelines on how to use them.

143. Approved programs should be shown unedited and without interruption except for station identification. No editing of any sort should be done without prior authorization from the Teaching Committee. None of the approved programs should be shown for commercial purposes. Permission will be granted to show our programs only in public service, educational, or noncommercial venues. They should not be shown in a context that could make it appear that we endorse any political or interfaith movement, hospital, or group.

144. The above guidelines should be provided to the broadcasting station for compliance every time one of the approved programs is to be aired. All branches have been sent a formatted sample of these guidelines for use as intended.

BROADCASTING DEPARTMENT

145. The Teaching Committee oversees the work of the Broadcasting Department at world headquarters, which involves the following areas of responsibility: (1) assisting branches with technical issues involving video streaming so as to link various venues to one originating location and (2) answering branch questions about convention and Assembly Hall audio and video sound equipment. This includes specification and installation issues.

WHQ TRAVEL DEPARTMENT

146. The Teaching Committee oversees the work of the WHQ Travel

Department, which involves the following areas of responsibility: (1) researching and securing air travel for headquarters personnel caring for their organizational assignments, (2) researching and securing air travel for those in foreign service who are eligible

to be funded to a convention of their choice, (3) overseeing the collection and management of accrued hotel reward points and other headquarters travel activities, and (4) reviewing convention venue rental expenses and assisting with hotel negotiations and usage.

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CHART 7.1

General Scope of Operation

Assemblies	Conventions	Meetings	Schools	Audio/Video
Prepares circuit assembly outlines and programs	Prepares outlines, manuscripts, dramas, and chairman's introductions for regional conventions Organizes international and special conventions <i>Approves Convention Organization Guidelines (CO-1) and the yearly News Service Kit</i>	Gives direction concerning congregation meeting programs and procedures Approves schedules for the Congregation Bible Study Prepares outlines for regular public talks, special talks, and public talks by circuit overseers Oversees branch dedications worldwide	Watchtower Bible School of Gilead School for Branch Committee Members and Their Wives School for Circuit Overseers and Their Wives School for Kingdom Evangelizers Appoints instructors for all schools listed above, worldwide Bethel Entrants' School Pioneer Service School School for Congregation Elders Kingdom Ministry School Theocratic Ministry School Literacy classes Theocratic Schools Department	Audio programs General-release videos Audio/Video Services (AVS) <u>JW Broadcasting</u> Regional Audio/Video Centers (RAVCs) in Brazil, Japan, Netherlands, and South Africa Recordings in branches Radio and television programs
News Service for circuit and regional events		Oversees Assembly Hall dedications worldwide		
WHQ Travel		Oversees dedications of remote translation offices worldwide		
Researches and secures air travel for those caring for WHQ assignments and for those in foreign service eligible to attend international conventions		Provides guidelines for Kingdom Hall dedications		
<u>Oversees the collection and management of accrued hotel reward points</u>		Provides guidelines for special meetings held in connection with branch visits		
<u>Reviews convention venue rental expenses and assists with hotel negotiations and usage</u>		Oversees Bethel speaker arrangement worldwide		
		Provides guidelines for Bethel morning worship		
		Appoints all Morning Worship chairmen worldwide		
		Prepares Bible reading schedule for the Bethel family worldwide		
		Prepares schedule for the Memorial Bible reading		
		Gives direction concerning Bethel family <i>Watchtower</i> Study		
		Approves Monday night Bethel lectures		
		Oversees Gilead graduation programs, including the selection of speakers and songs		
		Assists in the organization of the annual meeting programs, selecting appropriate songs		
Answers queries from translators concerning all of the above, often responding by means of WTS				
Corresponds with branches concerning all of the above				
Interaction with other committees and departments				
				AVS proofreads and posts <u>translation and production packages to MDS</u> <u>AVS transfers video files by posting these to AVMD</u>
Writing Committee proofreads materials and posts to MDS	Writing Committee proofreads materials and posts to MDS		Writing Committee proofreads materials and posts to MDS	Writing Committee oversees content of sign-language publications
Service Committee is responsible for the yearly meeting with regular and special pioneers held in conjunction with circuit assemblies (S-312)		Service Committee oversees <i>Our Kingdom Ministry</i>	Service Committee invites Gilead and branch school students and determines assignments of Gilead graduates. It provides branches with guidelines for organizing and scheduling other schools locally	

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CHAPTER 8

WRITING COMMITTEE

Web Publishing

1. The Web Publishing Department maintains the organization's Web sites. (See 3:89.) It works with departments at world headquarters and in the branches to develop Web content in many languages. This material includes answers to questions raised about the Bible by the public, information about our headquarters and branches, and news releases about events involving Jehovah's Witnesses. Selected publications can be read online or downloaded in various digital, audio, and video formats.

Writing Archives

2. The Writing Committee oversees Writing Archives, which is responsible for gathering, cataloging, and preserving material related to our theocratic history. Archival records and artifacts come from branches, congregations, individuals, and secular institutions. The Archives collection includes publications, clippings, documents, photographs, audiovisual recordings, and other items of historical value. Detailed life histories of longtime servants of Jehovah are also kept on file. Over time, such material is being digitized in order to provide electronic access and avoid damage to the original items. Archival research is used in preparing material for publication, display, and other educational purposes.

3. Many branches have assembled similar items during the preparation of *Yearbook* accounts and for other projects. The Writing Committee is interested in the preservation of such material, either at individual branches or at world headquarters. Consideration should be given to the proper organization and storage of such items, thus increasing their potential value for future research and publication.

Writing Articles for *The Watchtower* and *Awake!*

WRITING DESKS

4. The Governing Body has approved the setting up of Writing Desks in a number of branch offices. This arrangement has these objectives: (1) publish articles that reflect an understanding of local cultures found in various parts of the earth, (2) distribute the writing workload, and (3) **find additional individuals who are qualified to write.**

5. All Writing Desks come under the oversight of their respective branches. Thus, the branch can decide whether additional staff is needed to handle replies to inquiries received from the field that deal with Scriptural doctrine and our published material. However, Branch Committees need to obtain approval from the Writing Committee before adding permanent writers whose main work is to handle writing assignments for our publications.

6. The Writing Desk overseer is to supply copy to the Writing Department according to the schedule and instructions received from the Assignment Desk at world headquarters. If the Writing Desk overseer contacts other branches to request information not available locally, copies of such correspondence should be sent to the Assignment Desk in the Writing Department.

7. Those privileged to write articles should have writing ability and must be baptized, spiritually mature, and in good standing. They should be balanced, exemplary, modest, and not inclined to talk freely about their writing

activity. In most cases, writers should be elders. (Qualified sisters may be used to write certain articles, especially on subjects of interest to women. However, they should not be used to prepare material on cover subjects or articles that are expositions of Scripture.) Anyone assigned to write an article for *The Watchtower* or *Awake!* should be given a copy of the memorandum "Writing for Our Journals." Although it is not required that the writer read the *English Standards Manual*, he might find it beneficial to become familiar with some of its content. The brother in the branch who is responsible for sending in articles should be well-acquainted with it and should apply its standards to copy that is submitted to the Writing Department.

PREPARING MATERIAL

8. All writers should be conscious of the target audience for each of our journals:

Awake!

Readers of *Awake!* typically have little or no knowledge of the Bible. They may know nothing about Christian teachings, they may be somewhat distrustful of religion, or they may be unaware that the Bible has practical value. A primary objective of *Awake!* is to convince its audience that God exists. This journal also aims to help the reader to build faith in the Bible and to understand that Jehovah's Witnesses are different from other religious groups.

Awake! articles may deal with such subjects as animals, plants, customs, geography, history, religion, science, natural history, and occupations. Since the articles will be read by people of many cultures, the subjects and titles should have broad appeal. The articles do not have to be about the country where the writer is located, although they may contain material reflecting the relationship of that land to the subject. This can be accomplished by doing research in

books and periodicals published in that country and by mentioning places and customs peculiar to it if doing so is appropriate.

The Watchtower—Public Edition

This journal focuses more on spiritual matters because its target audience may have a measure of respect for God and for the Bible. They have some knowledge of the Bible but do not accurately understand its teachings. Many readers of the public edition are not familiar with Witness terms and concepts. If such are used in articles, they should be explained.

The Watchtower—Study Edition

This edition is written primarily for Jehovah's Witnesses as well as for those who attend our meetings, are familiar with the Scriptures, and understand Witness terms and concepts.

9. **Preview outlines** are usually submitted for approval before articles are written. A template is used for submitting a preview outline. In a branch that has a Writing Desk, the overseer of the desk is expected to work closely with the Writing Department at world headquarters and should be convinced that an outline is satisfactory before submitting it. [See Sample 8.1.] When a writing assignment is made, the length of the article is specified. Suggestions may also be made as to what the article may include. The writer may make limited changes in the outline as he works on the article. Preview outlines should be sent to the Assignment Desk with a covering memorandum.

10. **Time to do the work of writing varies.** Those not in full-time service can do their writing in the time they have available. The Writing Desk overseer and anyone who may be working with him full-time are expected to do such work during working hours. Other Bethel family members assigned to write articles may be asked whether they can do so on their own time or will need to use

some work time. Evenings or weekends may be used for this work, but no one should be discouraged from asking permission to use some work time for such an important assignment. The Branch Committee can grant a missionary, a special pioneer, or a regular pioneer a time allowance for writing. Some writing assignments may not require much time, whereas more time may be needed for others. It is best for a missionary or a special pioneer to care for a writing assignment within a single calendar month.

11. Field experiences and life stories submitted for our magazines often reflect the circumstances, attitudes, and customs of people living in the country where the material originated. Be sure that a worthwhile point is made by the experience or life story. Regarding the qualifications of those featured in life stories, see the memorandum "Writing for Our Journals."

12. Other articles may be suggested that would benefit our readers. Even if there is no one in the branch territory in a position to write articles, the Writing Department is glad to receive suggested topics or questions that can be handled in Scriptural or other articles. Remain alert to what is happening in the branch territory. When an event occurs that would be of interest to our readers (for example, if a natural disaster strikes), **quickly send the Writing Department at least a report and copies of news clippings** (with a good English translation if needed). At such times, the Assignment Desk may assign a writer to submit a completed article through the Writing Desk and/or Branch Committee. Act quickly when a newsworthy event occurs, as we may want to publish the article as soon as possible. Of course, copy submitted under these circumstances should be well-written and ready for publication. Articles based on personal experiences and interviews have human interest that cannot be conveyed by an article based only on other

news sources. Be careful when covering political events, since we are neutral and must avoid taking sides.

13. Send noteworthy news clippings to the Writing Department. By observing the material appearing in shorter articles and in the feature "Watching the World," determine what kinds of clippings are likely to be useful. Items and quotations from periodicals and books originating in the local branch territory should be accompanied by the full name of the author, the publication, and the publisher as well as the place of origin, the date, and the page number(s) involved. Indicate the specific article, and put a mark in the margin next to statements of particular interest. Send the entire clipping to the Writing Department along with a **good English translation of any foreign-language material**. Direct such correspondence to the Writing Department, Clippings Desk.

DOCUMENTING ARTICLES

14. Throughout an article, **place reference numbers in brackets** after quotations and facts requiring documentation. Attach separate reference pages listing the sources after the corresponding numbers. [See Sample 8.2.] This information is useful in many ways, and having it may even determine whether an article is published. For details, see the memorandum "Writing for Our Journals." With articles containing quotations from newspapers, magazines, books, or sources other than the *New World Translation*, send photocopies, with English translations if needed. Keep the originals for translation work or other use. If a certain quotation appeared previously in our literature, state where it was used. **An article must be accurate in every detail**, and that responsibility rests chiefly with the writer. Use only writers who do dependable research and carefully present the facts. When the Branch Committee coordinator or the Writing Desk overseer reads the article and sees something that

raises a question, that point should be checked with the writer or looked up to make sure it is correct. If it is wrong, delete it or make a correction. Clarify ambiguous statements.

SUBMITTING ARTICLES

15. Before submitting an article to the Writing Department, the Writing Desk overseer should **read the article very carefully** and appraise it in the light of what is said in the memorandum "Writing for Our Journals." The article should be worthy of publication. Also have in mind the possible **effect of the article on people living in the local territory**. Sometimes it is best not to say certain things, even though they are true. Do not submit material for publication that might cause difficulty for our brothers locally or elsewhere. Many things can be written that will not hurt our work and may even engender goodwill. The truth should be presented, of course, but in a tactful way.

16. An occasional article of local interest may be prepared for use in certain language editions of *Awake!* If such an article is written, include nothing that could put Jehovah's people in a bad light or cause us legal or other problems locally or elsewhere. The article must have Branch Committee and Writing Committee approval before it is scheduled for a magazine. Therefore, send it (with a good English translation) to the Writing Committee for approval. Completed articles must be submitted through the Branch Committee coordinator.

17. If possible, **send photographs with an article**, as these help the Art Department to prepare good illustrations. Photographs should be accompanied by signed releases, as explained in "Writing for Our Journals." If you learn that a model in a photograph that you supplied has become disqualified, please follow the guidelines provided in the letter dated HWC:HWG November 12, 2014, No. C-33346W.

18. Articles and related materials should be submitted electronically via the Materials Distribution System (MDS) by accessing "Transfers" under the "Writing Transfer" section. Detailed submission guidelines are available on MDS. If electronic submission via MDS is not possible, articles and related materials may be submitted with a covering numbered letter via branch mail.

19. Every article sent to the Writing Department must be dated and must bear the **names of the branch and the writer and the name or signature of the Branch Committee coordinator and the Writing Desk overseer**. These signatures or names indicate that the article is approved for publication.

Translation Responsibilities

OVERVIEW

20. While the Writing Committee oversees the translation of our publications worldwide, the Branch Committee oversees the translation work that has been assigned to its branch.

Note: Bracketed references can be found at the end of this chapter. [See List 8.1.]

DECIDING WHAT TO TRANSLATE

21. In addition to publications that will be printed, the Branch Committee supervises the production of audio and video material and publications for the deaf and the blind. They also coordinate the translation of materials for our Web site.

Languages That Have Literature

22. Before making recommendations to the Writing Committee:

- a. Consult the Priority List issued annually. Written languages and sign languages have separate Priority Lists. [1]

- b. The Writing Committee regularly informs all branches of new publications under development, provides contents listings, and explains the purpose of each publication.
- c. The Branch Committee decides whether a new publication should be translated into a language. The committee consults with the respective language overseers to determine whether the translation team would be able to translate additional publications. Dated publications and seasonal work (*Yearbook*, *Examining the Scriptures*, *Research Guide*, publications *Index*, assembly and convention outlines, and drama scripts) take precedence over new publications.

23. The Translation Department translates only publications used for field service, meetings, assemblies, and conventions. Materials needed by Legal, Construction, Maintenance, Hospital Information Services, Correspondence, and the Service Department are translated by individuals in those departments or by commuters.

24. These workers who are not part of the Translation Department may have access to the section of the Watchtower Translation System (WTS) that deals with general translation, and they are welcome to attend weekly team meetings of the Translation Department to stay up-to-date with the latest techniques and guidelines of translation. [2]

Starting Translation Into a New Language

25. The Branch Committee regularly reviews the spiritual needs of every language group under its care. The Service Department initiates the request to provide publications in a language into which we have not previously translated. The following information should be

provided to the Branch Committee for its consideration:

- Are publications needed although meetings are not regularly held in a language?
- Even though a group may use publications and/or attend meetings in another language, do the publishers find it difficult to participate in the meetings?
- Is there a language field that we do not reach because there are few, if any, publications in that language?

26. If we arrange meetings, assemblies, and conventions in a language and there is a large enough publisher base, we are committed to providing a steady supply of publications, namely, *The Watchtower*, *Our Kingdom Ministry*, a songbook, public talk outlines, and study material for the meetings. [See Chart 8.1.]

27. When the Branch Committee decides that a language group needs publications, the Service Department takes the lead in investigating what publications are needed.—See 7:40.

Procedure to investigate needs:

- a. Download the latest version of *New Language Translation Request*, available on the Publication Processing Documentation (PPD) site, under Translation>Translation and Language Overseers>General. Gather and review available information about the language and those who use it. Consult circuit overseers, pioneers, and publishers.
- b. Present findings to the Branch Committee.
- c. If the Branch Committee agrees to provide some literature, make sure that you have potential candidates who could qualify to be trained for translation work.

- d. The candidates should (1) be baptized, (2) know the target language very well—it should preferably be their mother tongue—and (3) be available for some weeks to receive training and to translate their first publications. You may invite publishers of varying backgrounds as candidates for training (male, female, older, younger, well-educated, having basic education, single, married, and so forth).

Procedure to start translation:

- e. Request permission from the Writing Committee to translate some publications, and include the completed New Language Translation Request form in the correspondence. Specify the format(s) being recommended for the publications (audio, print, video, Web).
- f. Once permission is granted, arrange for training to be given where the translators are located so that they do not need to travel far. Where possible, it is practical to train more than three candidates in order to have a larger pool of translators for future projects.
- g. Provide equipment and accommodations for the trainer. The trainer teaches the candidates basic translation techniques and works closely with them as they translate the first publications.
- h. The translated publications are reviewed by a panel of native speakers to ensure natural language.—See 8:49c.
- i. The translation is corrected and proofread, and the project team gives the translated publications a final check.
- j. The publications are composed at the branch or by the trainer. Audio recordings are made if equipment and appropriate readers are available.
- k. When the project is completed, the temporary translators return to their previous assignments.
- l. The Service Department informs the congregations that publications are available in a new language, provides guidelines on how to use the publications, assigns pioneers and publishers to the territory where the language is spoken, monitors the response from the field and, after a few months, provides a report to the Branch Committee.
- m. When the Branch Committee requests additional publications in a new language, the request should be accompanied by a report of (1) how many copies of each publication in that language are left in stock, (2) how many Bible studies are being conducted in that language, and (3) if congregation meetings are held in that language.—See 7:40.

28. When giving permission to begin translation, the Writing Committee provides specific direction on how to train the prospective candidates. The publication is printed at the printing branch. In exceptional cases, it may be printed locally, with approval from the Publishing Committee. Audio publications are usually recorded locally.

29. Sign-Language Translation:

When starting translation in a sign language, the same procedure is followed as with spoken languages. The Writing Committee provides a separate Priority List for sign languages and arranges specialized training when permission is given for the first publication in a sign language. If needed, additional training may be requested. [3]

Special Publications

30. Bible: The *New World Translation* is high on the Priority List, and translating it involves years of work. Branch Committees need to ensure that they have enough qualified translators to translate the Bible and at the same time keep up with the other approved publications. In some cases, however, it may be necessary to change a nonstudy magazine to a *less frequent* edition or to delay the release of other publications in order to complete Bible translation first. For example, a monthly edition of the public *Watchtower* or *Awake!* could become a bimonthly or a quarterly edition. When the Writing Committee gives permission to translate the Bible, it arranges initial and periodic training for the Bible translators by Writing Committee representatives. Branch Committees may ask for additional training when needed. A **Bible translation team** is composed of a minimum of one project team, a secretary, and an elder to serve as the translation coordinator. The Branch Committee usually recommends the most qualified translators for Bible translation, including brothers and sisters. It is permissible to use younger translators if they have special abilities. [4]

31. Nonstandard Magazine Editions: If a nonstandard edition of *The Watchtower* or *Awake!* (combination, bimonthly, or quarterly edition) is produced, the Branch Committee approves suitable articles that have been selected from a number of issues. [5]

32. Braille Publications: Braille publications can be transcribed using WTS. A large field of blind people is not required in order to justify making Braille publications in any language in which we have printed publications.

33. A branch desiring to transcribe publications into Braille should first request approval from the Writing Committee. The approval will be followed up with direction on how to proceed.

- While there is no Priority List for Braille publications, it is best to begin with a small nondated item, such as a tract or a brochure.
- Publications that can be transcribed into Braille generally include tracts, invitations, brochures, books, the *New World Translation*, *The Watchtower*, *Awake!*, and *Our Kingdom Ministry*.
- Specialized publications can also be transcribed, such as public talk outlines, invitations, programs, the *Pioneer* textbook, and the *Shepherding* textbook.
- On request, electronic text may be provided for blind and visually impaired readers who use Braille notetakers or computers with screen readers. These files can be posted on jw.org in notetaker (BRL) format and RTF format. [6]

34. Simplified Editions [7]

35. Songbook [8]

36. Multimedia Publications [9]

DEPARTMENT ORGANIZATION

37. Each language overseer assigns individuals to specific project teams.

38. Translation Capacity: The workload must be scheduled in such a way that team members do not have to work overtime for months on end. The Branch Committee carefully monitors the workload of the translators to make sure that they are not burdened with unreasonable schedules.

39. The Branch Committee requests permission for each new publication before translation work can begin. When requesting permission to translate a dated journal, specify which edition will be produced. When permission is granted, obtain the source text of the publication from MDS. The master copy of the

English Final mailing contains all corrections and approved updates.

40. Schedules: Local schedules for translating new and dated publications are based on the schedules for English publications provided by the Writing Department. For most publications, the Writing Department sends two different mailings:

(1) **Early mailing:** This contains early text to start translation and a preliminary PDF of the composed pages. At this point the text and artwork are **subject to change**. Nevertheless, translators should start working on these publications as soon as possible after this mailing is received. The compositors prepare the early composition pages for an audible reading check and a mechanical check of the translation.

(2) **Final mailing:** This mailing contains the finalized text and artwork. The project team compares the final adjustments of the English text with its translation to check whether any changes will affect the translated text.

41. Correction notices should be handled according to the guidelines provided by the Writing Committee. [10]

42. Translation errors in publications that have already been published in any format may be corrected with the approval of the Branch Committee. The printing date on the publishers' page should be updated. Complete retranslations requiring new copyright dates, corrections of serious translation errors that call for destroying copies in stock, and corrections to videos already produced need to be approved by the Writing Committee. [11]

Local Adjustments (Text and Art)

43. The Branch Committee recommends replacement material if the ma-

terial in the English could cause problems in the local field. The Writing Committee will review recommendations for replacement text.

44. The Branch Committee may give local approval for adjustments in the following matters:

- Replace illustrations or examples in the text that may be inappropriate for the local field.
- Replace references to our publications that are not available in the target language.
- Replace Scripture citations if the cited scriptures in the vernacular language do not support the point being made in English. **Replacing "read" scriptures** requires approval via the Translator Help Desk unless the change involves simply the citation range. [12]

45. When adjusting the text to adapt it to the local field, care must be exercised that facts are not distorted.

46. In rare instances, artwork may be unacceptable for some cultures. The Writing Committee will provide alternate artwork only if an image would endanger the safety of the brothers. [13]

Translation Questions

47. The Writing Committee handles the bulk of the translation questions. These are submitted using WTS. They are sent directly via e-mail by the language overseer to the Translator Help Desk Inbox.

48. Before sending a translation question to the Translator Help Desk, the project team first checks to see whether the question has already been submitted by another team. The language overseer reviews the question for clarity and completeness.

- a. During the translation process, editorial, cultural, legal, organizational, linguistic, procedural, and other questions need to be resolved.

- b. It is important that questions are submitted using WTS. This program packages the questions in the proper format so that they can be registered in the central database for efficient handling.
- c. The Translator Help Desk sends answers to all translation teams in daily hyperlink packages.
- d. Answers for one language may be applied to another language that has the same question. Project teams do not need to ask permission to apply such answers. [14]
- e. Questions should be submitted as early in the translation process as possible to avoid delays. All queries must be resolved prior to final composition.
- f. Teams should not be discouraged or hindered from sending questions.

Ensuring High-Quality Publications

49. The goal of the Governing Body is that all our publications be accurate, easy to read, and clearly understood by common people.

- a. The language overseer makes sure that each project team has the necessary training, experience, and maturity to produce a natural, accurate translation.
- b. Each translation team should actively seek feedback from the audience for whom they translate.
- c. Publications to be used extensively in the field should be reviewed by a small group of selected publishers who are representative of the field and of an age appropriate to the publication. The members of the review panel should prefer-

ably use the target language as their first language.—See 8:27h. [15]

- d. It is necessary that project teams keep in touch with how people in the field use their language.
- e. Personal preferences are not to be imposed on the project team. The language overseer has the responsibility to ensure that all project teams produce translations that are appealing and at the same time in harmony with the way the language is generally used.
- f. Project teams must take care not to use out-of-date expressions that are not understood by the majority of the readers.

50. Branch Committees rarely need to override the translation decisions of teams that have been carefully selected and thoroughly trained.

Workflow

51. All procedures for translation, checking, proofreading, composition, and mechanical checking should be performed as directed in *Translation Workflow* and *Composition and Mechanical Checking Workflow*. All in the department should be familiar with the latest version of these documents, which are posted on PPD.

52. The language overseer ensures that every publication is clean and press-ready before it is mailed to the file maintenance branch. He does this by making sure that all the necessary steps in the workflow are properly followed and that all involved in the process are thoroughly trained. Once the text leaves the translators for final composition, it should not be recalled for translation adjustments, except for changes needed because of correction notices. The goal is to send to the printing branch press-ready materials that can be printed without further correction.

53. Printing branches do not proofread or perform mechanical checks on publications they print for other branches. The printing branch may make necessary adjustments to the publishers' page to meet local legal requirements.

Office Equipment

54. Translators need a quiet office environment. Project teams should have sufficient office space to work without disturbing others. Everyone in the department should have:

- A suitable desk and comfortable chair
- Adequate lighting
- Good ventilation
- A computer as specified by the Computer Department at world headquarters
- Access to the research library for translators, which should be updated regularly

55. **Reference Materials:** All translators should have ready access to reference works that are frequently needed. The following is a partial list:

- Standard vernacular Bible(s)
- The latest electronic English dictionaries
- An up-to-date English-vernacular dictionary
- Target-language grammar books and dictionaries
- The revised English *New World Translation* (2013 Edition)
- *Watchtower Research* (English, plus vernacular library synchronized)
- A dictionary of English idioms
- The team dictionary [16]
- Where possible, translators should have Internet access on their computer. [17]

56. **All members of the department should have full access** to guidelines, translation training material, and correspondence that apply to their work. To

this end, make sure that the members of the department are added to the role groups that correspond to their assignments so as to have access to PPD.

57. **Standards Manual:** All languages should endeavor to compile a *Standards Manual* for the target language that sets out grammar rules and style guidelines. It will differ from the English *Standards Manual*. [18]

58. **Confidentiality:** Translators must keep confidential what is being translated and who works on each publication. The following materials are confidential and are strictly for the use of the Translation Department:

- Publications being translated
- Correction notices
- Translator comments
- Translator Help Desk questions and answers
- Research information
- Training materials

59. The above items are not for personal use and should not be distributed outside of the department. Every precaution should be taken to make sure that confidential material, either on paper or by electronic means, is not divulged to and cannot be accessed by anyone who is not authorized. *Failure to comply with these guidelines could lead to the termination of one's Bethel service.*

60. **All members of the Translation Department**, including temporary volunteers, must sign the *Watchtower Information Resources Confidentiality Affirmation Statement and Acknowledgement of Use of Work Software* before they start to work in the department.

TRANSLATION ORGANIZATION

61. The following functions are necessary for translation:

- Translation overseer (and assistants if needed)
- Language overseer(s)

- Team secretary(ies)
- Translation project team(s)
- Compositor(s)
- Digital publisher(s), Technical Support [19]

Note: Translators serving Service Department, Legal Department, and Printery needs are part of their respective departments and not part of the Translation Department.

Translation Overseer

62. He supervises the Translation Department and usually serves on the Branch Committee. He cares for the following matters: the size of the translation team (number of permanent workers and commuters), offices (recommends where they are located and whether facilities are rented or owned), language needs (sign language, Braille, Web site translation, composition, digital publishing), training (procedures, techniques, production), and all translation personnel. Although it would be preferable, it is not necessary for the translation overseer to have translation experience. However, he must be up-to-date with translation guidelines, translation techniques, production workflow, and be thoroughly familiar with the circumstances and needs of the languages under his oversight. If his workload is too heavy, an assistant(s) may be appointed to help him. If an assistant translation overseer is needed, a brother who is reliable and responds in good time to the needs of the translation teams should be selected. He cooperates with the language overseers to ensure that schedules are met and that directives from the Branch Committee and the Governing Body are implemented. Capable language overseers may be used in this capacity. [20]

Language Overseer

63. He works under the direction of the translation overseer. The language

overseer should have translation experience. He must speak the language well (ideally a native speaker), understand translation principles, have good oversight skills, and be able to organize the work efficiently. He must be communicative, loving, and kind. When a temporary team is formed, a temporary language overseer should be appointed to work with the team.

64. Responsibilities: Each language overseer keeps the translation overseer informed on worker needs and issues, translation recommendations, and production matters.

- His role is not simply administrative; it is a full-time assignment requiring interaction with the project teams on a daily basis. His office should be located where the project teams are to facilitate such communication.
- He thoroughly understands the translation process as set forth by the Writing Committee, and he is thoroughly familiar with translation principles and procedures.
- He does not institute his own workflow procedures.
- He ensures that proper procedures are followed when assigning responsibilities to Translation Department workers.
- He assigns work to the project teams, and he schedules production.
- He is responsible for ongoing translation training.
- He should be sensitive to direction and feedback from his oversight and the field, and he should be able to give clear direction.
- He should always be on the lookout for prospective translators.
- He should have access to MDS and PPD, as well as be given a printed copy or electronic access to this chapter of *Branch Organization*.

- At times, he will sit in with project teams as they translate in order to ensure that they function well and are following proper procedures.

Assistant Language Overseer

65. When three or more project teams are needed, it is necessary for the language overseer to select an assistant. One of the brothers serving on a project team should be trained to substitute for the language overseer when he is ill, away, or otherwise unavailable.

66. Responsibilities: The language overseer keeps his assistant **fully informed** of all matters concerning the department so that he will be able to replace the overseer seamlessly when circumstances require it. The assistant has access to MDS and PPD, just as the overseer has.

67. The assistant language overseer is **authorized** to make decisions in the absence of the overseer.

Team Secretary

68. This is a **well-organized** brother who must be able to keep track of translation files, schedules, and correspondence.

- The secretary should be capable of communicating clearly in written correspondence.
- This assignment requires some skill in organizing and maintaining accurate electronic files.
- If a brother is not available, a sister may be assigned as secretary.

69. Responsibilities: The team secretary is responsible for downloading and organizing electronic source materials from MDS, updating team dictionaries, backing up publications, and sending completed materials to the printing branch, as well as keeping track of other correspondence.

70. At least one other person in the department should know the basic func-

tions of the secretary and be kept up-to-date with procedures so as to be able to replace the secretary on short notice if necessary.

Project Teams

71. A project team is made up of three members who perform the roles of translator, checker, and proofreader. A detailed description of the various responsibilities of each member is presented in the *Translation Workflow* document. If possible, each language team should have the full number of project teams as specified by the Governing Body. [21]

72. Responsibilities: Working as a team of three (or four in some cases), the team translates, checks, and proofreads its own work. It is therefore a requirement that the team members be **able to work cooperatively in a team setting**.

- Although the project team translates, checks, and proofreads together, each member performs a specific function in the process.
- Each member must have a good command of his or her own language, and at least two members of the team must clearly understand the source language. It is not expected that one individual will have all the skills needed to translate, check, and proofread.
- Project team members also serve as audio coaches and followers.
- Each project requires different skill levels. Select individuals who will fit into a project team according to their skill level.
- Sisters can be used for most translation assignments, including the Bible.
- Whatever the translation assignment, each member of the project team must have a thorough understanding of Scriptural truth so that accurate and faithful translations can be produced.

73. It is expected that the cooperative translation process, as set forth in the *Translation Workflow* document, will be followed by the project team.

74. It is recommended that the project team members attend congregations that have meetings in their language and are using the target-language literature. This enables them to keep up-to-date with the language. It also means that they will personally use the target-language literature in the field.

75. Because brothers have the responsibility to teach in the congregation, at least one brother, preferably an elder, should work on each project team if at all possible. Branch Committees should search for qualified brothers who can be assigned to serve on project teams.

Compositors

76. The compositor must be familiar with computers, be a quick learner, and be attentive to detail. He or she should have an eye for making the text appealing in appearance and layout. The compositor needs to work in close cooperation with the translation team and be able to follow instructions carefully. Each language team needs a regular compositor and a backup compositor.

77. Responsibilities: The compositors must become completely familiar with all computer programs related to making publications. One compositor prepares early and final composition of the translated material. The second compositor does publication checking of the composed pages.

- Both compositors need to work regularly in composition to maintain their skills at a high level.
- Compositors may be given other work assignments within the department, such as digital publishing or Braille transcription, especially when few publications are being translated and composition is not a full-time assignment.

- Thorough training is required and is available on request to the Writing Committee.

78. Composition is part of the Translation Department, not the Printery or Graphics. The compositors should work in the same physical vicinity as the translators to facilitate good communication. Remote translation offices will usually have on-site compositors.

Technical Support

79. A well-qualified computer support person must be assigned to the Translation Department. He has to be familiar with WTS and other programs used by the translators. The person must be available whenever needed to assist the translators and be personable in his dealings.

80. Responsibilities: He maintains the Translation Department's computer program data files. He backs up the production files every day. He trains all workers to use the translation programs provided by the organization.

81. Remote translation offices must have resident computer support to guarantee security and reliable service.

Digital Publisher(s)

82. Research libraries need to be well maintained and up-to-date. They are needed to produce EPUB and WPUB files for the Web site, the *Research Guide*, *Watchtower Library*, *Watchtower ONLINE LIBRARY*, the *Watch Tower Publications Index*, and Braille transcription.

83. As more publications become available in a language, it will be necessary to assign enough personnel to care for the items listed in 8:82. Training for this specialized work is available on request from the Writing Committee.

84. Additional workers are needed to produce the *Watch Tower Publications Index*. Those working on research libraries should not be assigned to work simultaneously on a translation project team.

Finding New Translators

85. Only baptized publishers in good standing are used as translators.

- a. Check to see if there are regular Bethelites who may qualify.
- b. Check new Bethel applications for prospective translators.
- c. Meetings held at regional conventions for those interested in Bethel service provide a good opportunity to locate prospective candidates. Those interviewing the prospective applicants should be alerted to the need for translators. [See Chart 8.2.]

Evaluating Prospective Translators

86. When evaluating prospective translators, please follow the latest instructions from the Writing Committee.

- a. The spirituality of the applicant needs to be carefully assessed. Humility and modesty are essential.
- b. The prospective translator must be able to work in a team environment.
- c. It is rare to find a translator who is highly skilled as a translator, checker, and proof-reader.
- d. The testing process should reveal **potential in one of the areas**. Training will be required, since it is not expected that fully qualified translators will be found. Individuals who have good basic skills can be trained.
- e. When searching for sign-language translators, look for individuals who have keen insight into the way deaf people think and communicate.

Training New Translators

87. It drains valuable resources to train someone who does not have the apti-

tude. Potential will usually be evident after an initial three-month training period. However, it usually takes 12 to 24 months for new members of a project team to find their place in the team and to make a substantial contribution.

- New translators may at times be assigned to work on a project team as a fourth member.
- After approximately three months, qualified translators meet with the language overseer to decide whether the trainee exhibits sufficient progress to warrant further training.
- If it becomes clear during the initial training period that the trainee does not have the necessary aptitude, he could be reassigned to another department in Bethel or to the field.

88. Training too many people at the same time places an unreasonable load on experienced workers.

Replacement and Backup Workers

89. When a member of the Translation Department needs to be replaced, it normally takes some years before a replacement reaches the desired level of proficiency. This loss can take a heavy toll on the other members of the department and on the quality of translation.

90. Even if the team already has its required quota of workers, backup workers may be given training. They may be available to help out on a temporary basis when a regular member of the team is sick or away. They would therefore be able to fill in should someone leave unexpectedly.

91. When a department member gets married and asks to remain at Bethel, the Branch Committee should seriously consider what can be done to retain him if the prospective mate qualifies for Bethel. There must be available accommodations and a work assignment for the mate. In some cases, the branch is able to retain the services of a translator

as a commuter Bethelite while the mate serves in the field.

Training Members of the Department

92. Everyone in the Translation Department needs ongoing training, since it is important that the workers do not get into a rut and stagnate in their abilities.

- The language overseer and his assistant are responsible for directing and monitoring the training of every individual under their oversight.
- Please ensure that you select those who have specialized skills or, at least, have the aptitude to serve as compositors, translators, checkers, proofreaders, secretaries, computer technicians, research indexers, coaches, or overseers.
- Project teams should keep up-to-date with their language, the source language and, more important, stay up-to-date with the truth as revealed through the faithful and discreet slave.
- All must **have direct access** to the training materials provided by the Writing Committee.
- Compositors must stay up-to-date with the latest methods and style adjustments made by the Writing Committee.

Training at Weekly Meetings

- Material from translation questions and answers, translator comments, current translation problems, policy letters from the Writing Committee, and *Translating for Our Publications* and its appendixes can be considered. [22]
- Letters and comments from the field on the quality of the vernacular translation can be discussed.
- Refresher courses can be presented by experienced workers on

how to use WTS, research tools, and reference materials.

- Suggestions that would improve work habits, productivity, accuracy, and so forth should be scheduled for general discussion.
- In addition to their initial training, members of the department should be helped to stay up-to-date with the latest computer tools, policies, techniques, and directives from the Writing Committee.

93. Those working on the *Watch Tower Publications Index*, the *Research Guide*, and *Watchtower Library* need to review carefully all aspects of their work for every new edition they produce.

94. The team secretary should alert the language overseer of new directives so that he can arrange appropriate training.

Training Resources

- Training courses are provided by the Writing Committee. Such courses include training in translation techniques, indexing, workflow, composition, and organizing the department.
- The Branch Committee may ask the Writing Committee to provide this or other specialized training.
- The Writing Committee automatically arranges training for new translation teams and for Bible projects.

REMOTE TRANSLATION OFFICES (RTOs)

95. The Branch Committee locates RTOs where the target language of the translation team is predominant. It is best to relocate a translation team if the branch office is situated where the translators cannot attend meetings using their language and they are rarely exposed to that language. When considering an RTO, the branch should review the latest *Remote Translation Office Facility Guidelines*. [23]

WORKERS AT A REMOTE TRANSLATION OFFICE (RTO)

96. The Branch Committee should recommend three elders to take the lead at the RTO—a language overseer, a home overseer, and a maintenance overseer.

Language Overseer

97. The language overseer ensures that the translation work is well-organized.

Home and Maintenance

98. The home overseer cares for the personal needs of all workers at the RTO. He is also responsible for purchasing, cleaning, and meals. The maintenance overseer cares for buildings, security, and property. These brothers may be part-time commuters. **For larger teams,** it may be necessary for these brothers to work full-time, depending on the need. If some need to reside at the RTO, it may be good if the language overseer is one of the residents.

Part-Time Commuters and Temporary Volunteers

99. Part-time commuters, often regular pioneers, may serve at the RTO on an ongoing basis. In order to translate assembly and convention materials, experienced translators may be invited for a few days, some weeks, or even a month

or two. If a volunteer is expected to serve more than a total of six months in a year, his application needs to be reviewed by the Personnel Committee. **[24]**

Full-Time Commuters and Permanent Members

100. The branch arranges living quarters for some workers, while others commute. If rooming at the RTO is limited, priority should be given to the language overseer and to other members of the translation team. Full-time commuters work five days a week and receive many of the same privileges as regular members of the Bethel family, with the exception that they do not live at the RTO. Whenever a recommendation is made to the Personnel Committee for someone to serve as a full-time commuter, the branch should include a recommendation for an appropriate allowance to cover housing, transportation, and personal expenses.

Spiritual Programs

101. Ensure that all the Bethel spiritual programs are provided at the RTO. Morning worship and the Bethel family *Watchtower* Study should be conducted regularly. Where possible, RTOs can be tied in with the branch office for these programs.

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LIST 8.1

Bracketed References:

A copy of the following documents can be found on the Publication Processing Documentation (PPD) site.

1. See the latest translation priority lists.
2. Letter dated GED:ETA June 29, 2010.
3. Document *Producing Sign-Language Publications*, dated March 2010.
4. Document Guidelines for Bible Translation.
5. Letter dated HWC:HWG July 24, 2012, No. C-9466W.
6. Document *Caring for the Needs of the Blind and Visually Impaired.*
7. Letter dated HWC:EHA April 28, 2011, provides direction on how translators may use the simplified English edition of *The Watchtower* in their work. Letter dated HWC:ETA January 2, 2014, No. C-24522W, clarifies use of the simplified layout.
8. Documents *Translating Sing to Jehovah* (ESA January 24, 2008), *Guidelines for Preparing Lyrics for Sing to Jehovah*, *Composition Guidelines for Sing to Jehovah* (EHA February 14, 2009), and *Translating "Sing to Jehovah" Into Sign Language.*
9. Appendix Outline No. 12.
10. Letter dated GEA:ESA October 17, 2007, provides comments on handling correction notices. See "Application of corrections" guidelines dated HWG August 15, 2012. Letter dated HWG:EHA October 9, 2012, No. C-11673W, explains how to process correction notices for older publications. Letter dated HWC:HWG October 17, 2013, No. C-22385W, explains when and how to update audio publications.
11. Letter dated HWC:HWG June 30, 2014, No. C-29965W.
12. Letter dated HWB:ETA July 9, 2014, No. C-30231W.
13. Letter dated HWC:HWG March 4, 2013, No. C-15758W.
14. Letter dated GEA:ETA October 10, 2007, explains how translators benefit from translation questions and answers provided for other languages.
15. Appendix Outline No. 2h.
16. Information on maintaining the team dictionary can be found in the Appendix outlines.
17. Letter dated GED:ETA May 17, 2010, regarding Internet access for translators.
18. Document *Standards Manual* (for English publications) is available in the Translation section of PPD.
19. Letter dated HWC:HWB July 10, 2013, No. C-19448W.
20. Letter dated HWC:HWB June 20, 2013, No. C-18924W.
21. Letter dated HWB:ETA April 18, 2014, No. C-27795W.
22. Letters: GEA:ETA October 10, 2007, explains how translators benefit from translation questions and answers provided for other languages; GEA:ETA September 8, 2009, explains how to use translator comments; GEA:ETA June 26, 2003, includes the documents *Translating for Our Publications* and Appendix 1 and provides instructions on using the appendixes in weekly team meetings.

23. Letters HWB:ETA July 20, 2011, HPA:HT July 3, 2012, No. C-8894P, and the *Remote Translation Office Facility Guidelines* provide direction on establishing and supporting RTOs. Letter HT:HBB February 1, 2012, No. C-4195P, sets a preapproved budget for short-term rentals of RTOs. See also the document *Remote Translation Office Computer Equipment Guidelines*.

24. Letter from the Personnel Committee dated HWC:HLB December 6, 2013, No. C-23837L, outlines the policy regarding the approval process for recommending temporary volunteers.

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SAMPLE 8.1

PREVIEW OUTLINE

Prepared by: [writer's name]		Location: [branch]	
Approved by: [Branch Committee member]		Date submitted: [10/15/11]	
Magazine edition for which the article is recommended: (choose one)			
<input type="checkbox"/> <i>Awake!</i>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<i>Watchtower</i> (public edition)	<input type="checkbox"/> <i>Watchtower</i> (study edition)
Which category best sums up the primary objective of the article? (choose one)			
<input type="checkbox"/> Inform the reader about a particular subject, belief, or way of life.—See <i>g</i> 9/11 12-13.			
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Persuade the reader to change his belief about the subject.—See <i>wpl</i> 9/1 21-23.			
<input type="checkbox"/> Motivate the reader to take a certain course of action.—See <i>wll</i> 5/15 11-15.			
<input type="checkbox"/> Warn the reader against taking a certain course of action.—See <i>g</i> 12/09 28-29.			

Article Title: Was There Really a Garden of Eden?

Provide a one-sentence summary of the proposed article: Many say that the Eden account in Genesis is mere myth, but the facts show that we can trust this record, which is essential to understanding the rest of God's Word.

Briefly outline below the main points and the secondary points the article will cover:

Introduction: People the world over know of the garden of Eden but may dismiss it as a myth

Discuss and answer four common objections to the Eden account

1. Was the garden a real geographical place?
2. Is it realistic to say that God made Adam from dust and Eve from a rib?
3. Do the trees of life and of knowledge seem more mythical than real?
4. Does not a talking serpent seem like the stuff of fairy tales?

Why does it matter whether the garden of Eden was real?

The garden reveals much about God's original purpose for the earth

God intended that mankind fill the earth as a perfect, united family

Jesus referred to that hope as a real one (Lu 23:43); God's purpose never changes

To examine and value the Eden account is to embrace a thrilling hope for the future

SAMPLE 8.2

[DO NOT SET] References

1. *Scientific American*, (magazine; New York), Special Issue 2008, entitled "Majestic Universe," pp. 6-10;

Rare Earth: Why Complex Life Is Uncommon in the Universe, by Peter D. Ward and Donald Brownlee, ©2000, (Copernicus, an Imprint of Springer-Verlag New York, NY), heading "Habitable Zones of the Universe," pp. 28-29.

2. *Scientific American*, Special Issue 2008, p. 11.
3. *Perfect Planet, Clever Species—How Unique Are We?* by William C. Burger, ©2003, (Prometheus Books, Amherst, NY), pp. 32, 34, 40.
4. *World Book Encyclopedia*, ©2005 (World Book, Inc., Chicago, IL), "Earth [Planet]," electronic ref., p. 1.
5. *Perfect Planet, Clever Species—How Unique Are We?* pp. 24, 34.
6. *Insight on the Scriptures*, Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society of Pennsylvania, 1988, (Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of New York, Inc., Brooklyn, NY), Vol. 2, heading "Sun," p. 1043;

NASA, Earth Fact Sheet, April 19, 2007, subhead "Bulk Parameters," (<http://nssdc.gsfc.nasa.gov/planetary/factsheet/earthfact.html>), accessed March 13, 2008, (of 3) p. 1;

Encarta Reference Library 2005 DVD, ©1993-2004, (Microsoft Corporation), "Moon Facts and Figures," p. 1.
7. The Victoria College, (Victoria, Texas), heading "Marine Ecology," subhead "Tides," (<http://www.victoriacollege.edu/>), accessed April 11, 2008, (of 5) pp. 2-3.
8. *Mikołaj Kopernik i jego nauka*, (Nicolaus Copernicus and His Theory), by Stanisław R. Brzostkiewicz, ©1973, (Nasza Księgarnia, Warszawa), p. 118.

ORIGINAL POLISH: [strona 118:] Powrócił [Kopernik] do przyrządów, jakich do obserwacji nieba używali starożytni, a ponieważ nie były one wówczas w powszechnym użyciu, musiał sam odtwarzać ich wygląd.

TRANSLATION: [page 118:] He [Copernicus] reverted to using the instruments of ancient astronomers, but as they were not commonly used in his time, he had to reconstruct them from pictures.

CHART 8.1

How to Determine the Needs of a Language

Established Translation

- What is next on the Priority List?
- Review Writing Committee's description of the content and the purpose of a new publication.
- For publications yet to be released, discuss with the language overseer any details that have been provided as well as the workload.
- Are there any special needs? (Bible, *Insight*, audio, video, Braille, large-print, simplified, Internet distribution, *Watchtower Library*)
- Before recommending a new project, review the *Publications and Formats* document on PPD.

New Translation

- How many publishers speak the language?
- Are meetings regularly held in this language?
- How many are dependent on this language for spiritual food?
- In what language do those attending comment?
- See additional questions on the *New Language Translation Request* form on PPD.

Make recommendations to the Writing Committee.

CHART 8.2

Factors to Consider When Requesting Additional Workers for Translation

- Do you have the full number of workers allowed by the Governing Body?
(See letters dated HWC:HWB July 10, 2013, No. C-19448W, and HWB:ETA April 18, 2014, No. C-27795W.)
- Is the recommended individual qualified for the assignment?

Regular Production (Dated materials)	Specialty Items	Technical Services
<i>The Watchtower</i> <i>Awake!</i> <i>Our Kingdom Ministry</i> Convention material and releases <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does every worker have a specific assignment? • Can you use full-time commuters? • Can the work be handled by part-time commuters? • If requesting a deaf worker, review the letter dated HWC:HWB July 22, 2011. • If recommending someone as a permanent team member, has he been properly evaluated? 	Songbook <i>New World Translation</i> <i>Insight</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For Bible translation, did you assign the most experienced translators? • Did you assign replacement workers? • Can experienced translators be invited as temporary workers for these items? 	Daily backup Software updates Computer security Research indexing User support Digital formats (EPUB, WPUB) Braille production Composition Publications <i>Index</i> production <i>Watchtower Library</i> , <i>Research Guide</i> , WOL <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do you have a trained backup compositor? • Do the RTOs have resident computer support? • Do you update Watchtower research libraries regularly? • Do you have full-time workers assigned to research indexing?

When requesting permission to add workers to the Translation Department, follow the standard procedure. To avoid unnecessary correspondence, provide complete information. Letters: HWC:HLB December 6, 2013, No. C-23837L, clarifies the procedure for requesting temporary workers; HWC:HLB December 6, 2013, No. C-23838L, clarifies the procedure for recommending potential translators.

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